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The Old Plantation

AND

Other Poems

BY

COL. JAMES GORDON

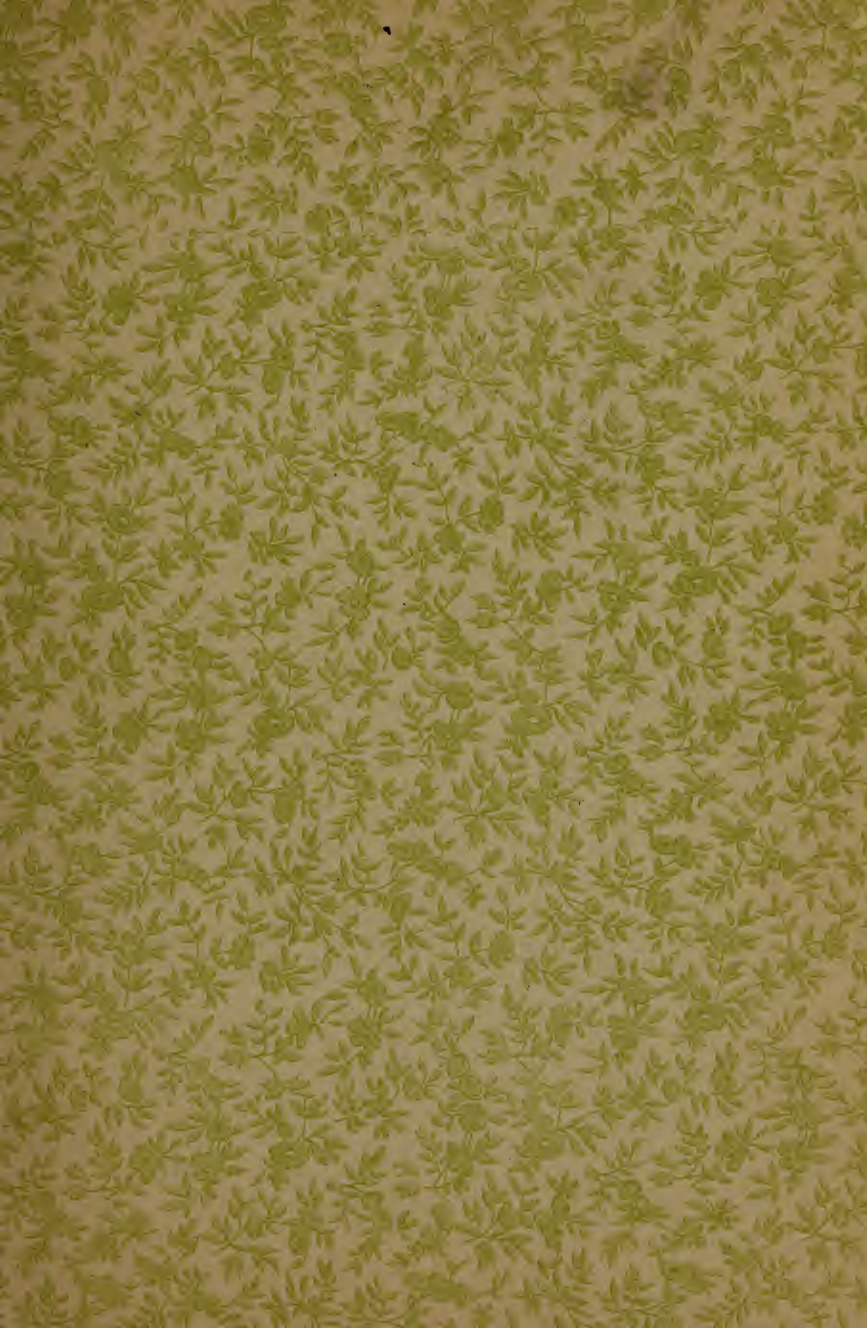


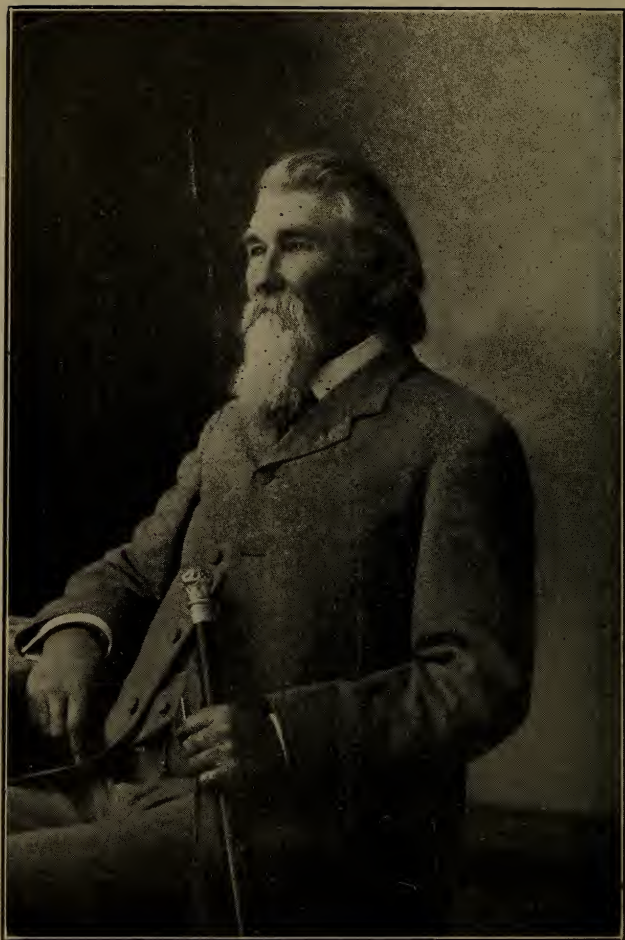
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COL. JAMES GORDON

THE
OLD PLANTATION
AND
OTHER POEMS

BY
COLONEL JAMES GORDON

1909

TELL FARMER, PRINTER AND BINDER
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DEDICATION

*To Col. E. L. Russell,
of Mobile, Alabama.*

I DEDICATE this little book of poems to you because I know you to be a typical Southern gentleman, endowed with all the virtues the term may signify. You have filled every position of trust and honor that has fallen to your lot with credit to yourself, the States and people who delight to honor you for your loyalty to duty as a soldier, citizen and railroad official. Your integrity and worth have won the confidence and esteem of all who know you. It is not alone for your moral worth and the success you have won in business life, for which you have received the applause of men, that I inscribe this testimonial of my regard for your many virtues, but because you have been my friend, and I love you.

JAMES GORDON.

PREFACE.

HAVING been elected Poet by the Alumni Association of the University of Mississippi for its annual meeting at Commencement, 1909—where a large attendance of old students is expected for the home-coming to our Alma Mater—I have prepared a poem descriptive of plantation life as it existed at the close of the Civil War, which found the Southern planter confronted by a race problem which threatened a calamity more disastrous than war, pestilence and famine combined—where every obstacle was met by a courage and unselfish devotion to principle only equaled by their valor and endurance on many an ensanguined field of battle. How nobly they met disasters which destroyed the grandest civilization known on earth, belongs to the history of the past century. The unsolved problem still hangs like the sword of Damocles over the destinies of the South. For this occasion I have se-

lected "The Old Plantation" as a subject for my verse, and one of greatest interest to the people of the South, and for the enlightenment of the nation. I have portrayed the Southern plantation in each season's garb of beauty, and the negro in his true character, as only Southerners know him, stripped of the idealized gauze and filigree the Northern mind has painted him in a new civilization, in which he has proved an ignominious failure and most disastrous to the South.

The statesmen of today must leave to a future generation the solution of a problem we were not permitted to handle in the way we thought best, and one, if tampered with by ignorance and prejudice, may not only destroy our civilization, but wreck our republic.

Besides the above-mentioned poem, I have included some smaller poems, a number of which were the effusions of boyish fancies in early youth, and others of later date, which I hope will interest the students of our Alma Mater, as well as many friends scattered over our Southland, and may even find an interested reader in the North, who will not reject a few wild flowers gathered from the fields of the

South. We, the veterans of the old regime, who are rapidly "passing over the dark river to rest under the shade of the trees" in the great beyond, have left to posterity a legacy that will emblazon the pages of history with the splendor of achievement, with a chivalry and devotion to the Lost Cause and "the land we love," that will live in song and story in ages yet to come, when the proudest boast of the Southern youth will be that he bears in his veins the blood of a Confederate soldier. A people who have no pride of ancestry can never achieve greatness.

THE AUTHOR.



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THE OLD PLANTATION.

SWEET land of cotton, corn and pine,
Long may your old red hills entwine
With passion flower and columbine
 To give you pleasure,
And may the gods ever incline
 To fill your treasure !

Never more may war's alarms
Call your gallant sons to arms
Away from sweet home's happy charms,
 To meet the foeman ;
But peaceful dwell upon your farms
 Contented yoeman.

And as the years go circling round,
And crops are gathered from the ground,
When Christmas comes may you be found
 In joyous meeting,
And hear again the jovial sound
 Of friendly greeting.

We love to hear from all the places,
And see our neighbors' happy faces,
Where pretty girls, and flowers in vases,
 In beauty bloom,
And happy youths greet nymphs and graces
 Around the room.

The crops are gathered in the fall ;
The stock are feeding in each stall ;
The young folks dancing in the hall
 In graceful measure ;
A prosperous year brings joy to all
 With added treasure.

Merry Christmas now has come,
The eggs are beaten to a foam,
The egg-nog makes a jolly home ;
 Thus Christmas charms
The hearts of those who seldom roam
 From off their farms.

CHRISTMAS.

With every kind of instrument
That human genius could invent,
The gathering clan of neighbor boys
Awake the hills around with noise;
And any mischief, for their fun,
They should not do is always done;
For Christmas comes but once a year,
Bringing its merriment and cheer,
With bust-skull whiskey for the prog,
While gents and ladies sip egg-nog.
And down among the negro quarters.
All of Afric's sons and daughters
Are just as happy, bright and gay
In joyous greetings, Christmas day.
On Christmas eve the negroes gather
Regardless of the wind or weather.
There is something in the hands of Fate.
Important as affairs of state
Are weddings, like one of which we're told
Was held at Cana centuries old ;
For, Hymen's altars' sacred fires,
Still kindled by love's sweet desires,

Burn in human hearts the same
As when God in Eden lit the flame.
The latest from the old plantation,
By those who have an invitation,
A wedding is on hand this year,
And negroes come from far and near,
In haste to join the merry throng
With joyful shouts and gleeful song.
To me it always did seem strange—
In weddings there's so little change,
So common and with no variety—
Why they should so excite society.
The oddest pair on the plantation—
A rather queer amalgamation—
The bride had Indian blood and white,
Which made the negro color light.
The bridegroom had the blackest face
Of any negro on the place.
He walked as if he faced a blizzard,
Because each foot contained a gizzard,
And where the hollow should be found
It made its imprint on the ground.
The parson, filled with Bible lore,

Faced this couple on the floor,
And, while by all the guests surrounded,
A Scripture lecture there expounded
On marriage laws by church and state:
“An’ by dese laws dat dey create
De preacher wuz der insterment
Lovers’ confections ter cement.
An’ by dese laws de state done make,
He ties er knot yer dar not break.
Dis couple now stands fur a ’spection.
If any one hez a rejection
Why dis couple, groom and bride,
Should not in marriage vows be tied
So tight dat dar is no release,
So speak or ever hol’ yer peace.
Dat means, while libin in de Souf,
You niggers had better keep yer mouf!
Dars no dejection; I’ll percede
In de performance uv de deed.
De gemman and lady ’ill jine right han’s,
I’ll unite em den in holy bans.
Den ercordin to de ordination
Made by Almighty God’s creation

Now I jes wants dis colored man
 To know it is de Maker's plan,
 An', when dis ceremony closes,
 You'll find de law in book uv Moses.
 Duz yer take dis gal dat by yer stands,
 Hol'in' togedder by de han's,
 Ter be yer lawful wedded wife,
 An support her kindly all yer life?
 You swar you'll never lub her less
 In richesness or poorishness?
 You'll take dis woman ter yer heart
 Till death or lawyers breaks yer erpart?
 All tother women you will leabe,
 An only unto her you'll clebe?"

He shrugged his shoulders, bowed his head,
 And scarcely audibly he said:
 "I duz!"

The negroes sniggered, all unheeded,
 The parson with the bride proceeded:
 "Do you take dis man whose hand yer hold,
 An understan' dat you've been sold,
 Dat dar license de state done granted
 Gins him er rite can't be recanted?

Duz yer swar you'll neber leabe,
Forsakin' tothers, always cleabe
Ter him in poverty or wealth,
Ter be true in sickness or in health?
Yer mus' forever bar his name,
In richesness or poorishness de same,
Lub an' obey wid all yer heart,
Which nuffin but death or law ken part.
Duz yer promise dis?" She said, "I will!"
The negroes sniggered, then stood still.
"I now pernounce yer man and wife.
Salute yer bride; bewar of strife."
Then there was laughing, fun and fussing
Over the bride and bridegroom bussing.
After the ceremony, soon,
Old fiddler Horace struck a tune,
And Isom with his banjo thumping,
Set all the negroes' hearts to jumping.
Old Horace made the fiddle squeal,
As he shouted: "Pardners fur a reel!"
The parson thought the vilest sin
Was dancing to the violin;
And when he saw the bride and groom

Lead in the dance, he left the room.
This the youngsters little heeded ;
The parson was no longer needed;
They saw no sin while thus they stood
With merry hearts all feeling good.
Lord ! how those happy negroes danced
As up and down the floor they pranced,
Down the sides and up the middle,
Cheered by the banjo and the fiddle !
The dandy barber from the town,
Who was a dancer of renown,
Odorous with Macasser oil,
(But not the scent of sons of toil)
With shining locks behind his ears,
And fancy steps that brought him cheers
From the admiring boys and girls,
As round he spun in graceful twirls.
Jim Bones, star-dancer of the place,
Looked on the scene with frowning face.
Envy is a poisonous dart
That bears its venom to the heart
And turns the blood by a deflection
From every virtue and affection.

Jim Bones, who felt himself berated,
In his heart the barber hated.
No leopard spots with bastard bleach
Could Bones's pedigree impeach,
While the barber's yellow tan
Betrayed the mixed blood in the man,
Which comes to light in form and graces
Often seen in mongrel races.
Bones then remarked: "A yellow horse
Had never won on a race-course;
While he might win a quarter race,
He could not go a four-mile pace."
This innuendo most unkind
Showed plain the bent of Bones's mind,
Madly there with envy haunted,
Unduly hurt by sneering taunted,
Which made him all the more excited,
A test of skill he then invited,
By stepping out on heel and toe—
While Horace louder scraped his bow—
With wire twist and double shuffle,
Bantered the barber to the scuffle.
The dancers stopped, tho' not to rest,

But to view their favorites in the test
Of skill in Terpsichorean arts
On puncheon floor to act their parts.
“Go it, Bones!” “Set to him, barber!”
The cheering made them dance the harder.
“Hurrah, Bones, you beats creation!”
Arose a shout from the old plantation.
“Dat barber wid de highlan’ fling
Can’t tech a nigger’s pigeon wing!”
Around they went, and o’er and o’er;
Bones’ brogans shook the puncheon floor;
And, tho’ the night was cold and bleak,
The oil ran down the barber’s cheek;
From Bones fell drops of perspiration
As in summer on the old plantation!
It seemed that Bones must surely lose;
The barber had on dancing shoes,
And his steps were light and airy;
He touched the puncheons like a fairy.
Bones, equal to the great occasion,
The honor of the old plantation—
They did not understand his game—
Danced as if his feet were lame.

This was a cunning scheme he plann'd—
He danced with one foot in his hand,
Thus his wily scheme to smother,
He dropped that foot, took up the other—
A strategic movement that he chose
Deftly to untie his shoes.
And when they thought that Bones was beat,
He came down heavy on both feet,
As if by magic then jumped out,
And kicked his great brogans about,
Both heel and toe like lightning rocking,
For Bones was dancing in his stocking!
Plantation boys now cut their jokes;
Bones' legs whirled round like buggy spokes,
And turning with such ease and grace,
Noiseless, as if he danced on space,
In varied evolution spun,
Till all declared Jim Bones had won!
It always made the parson grieve
When negroes met on Christmas Eve.
It mattered not how much he prayed,
His summer converts always strayed.
Horace, with Mephistophelian bow,

And Isom, with his old banjo—
Each Christmas gave them such a chance
To entrap his members with the dance—
The wretches tempted them to sin
With banjo and the violin.
He read a chapter, raised a hymn;
The elder sisters all chimed in,
Tho' some of them were much inclined
To loiter in the room behind;
While they could hear the music play
They did not think it time to pray.
The younger set, more loath to leave
Their comrades on a Christmas Eve,
While all the elders joined in prayers,
The younger knelt beside their chairs,
With eyes half closed, and hearts that long
To join the dancers' merry throng.
The parson, tho' he lectured well
And pictured how they'd fare in hell,
Yet there was longing for the revel;
They feared the parson, not the devil!
Then, when a girl from th' old plantation
Cried, "Let's play 'Twistification!'"

The parson saw, with much surprise,
 He'd have to make a compromise,
 Or the devil would win the whole
 And he'd not save a single soul.
 This was a play for Christian negroes—
 They only sung and walked thro' figures;
 It was no dance, no soul was lost,
 Because their feet were never cross'd.
 A tall, black negro then arose
 And said, "Dis meetin' better close.
 Ter help dese gals get up a faster motion,
 I'll sing a song dat's better to my notion."
 With that, he raised a most unearthly yell.
 The scene that follow'd, no pen of mine can 'tell!
 And all the witches seen by Tam O'Shanter
 Never got up one-half so wild a canter:

SONG.

Shake your foot, my own true love,
 Twis' yer heel, my darlin'!
 De ole cow died wid de whoopin-cough;
 De calf it died a-starvin'.
 An' Punkin Sall, de yaller gal—

She was a preacher's daughter—
 She wouldn't dance when she got a chance,
 An' she died uv drinkin' water.

De sun is set in a yaller sky,
 De moon on white clouds floatin',
 De little stars in the waters shine,
 While I my lub am courtin'.
 We sot beneath de chestnut tree,
 We heer'd de bees er hummin',
 De woodpecker peck'd on a dead tree limb,
 An' de turkey gobbler's drummin'.

Lean on my breast, my own true lub,
 An' put yer han' in mine,
 An' curl your arm in mine, my lub,
 Like de gourd handle on de vine.
 Lif' yer feet from de puncheon floor
 An' step, my lub, up higher;
 Shake off dat mud dar, Gumbo Sam,
 Like de steer shakes off de mire.

Then the parson, filled with anger, did arise,
 Saying, the devil had beat his compromise.

Perhaps the parson might have added more,
 When the fiddler, Horace, entered in the door;
 As the parson left the door he slammed it,
 Shouting back: "The fiddler would be
 damned yet."

The devil had broken up his congregation,
 And captured all upon the old plantation.

The "Twistification" negroes wildly pranced,
 The fiddle only helped them as they danced.
 I'll stop my muse, for no encomium
 I'd give to such a Pandemonium.

With dance and song the night wore on apace.
 The parson's converts fallen, all, from grace,
 Yet, strange to say, tho' some were growing
 nappy,

Christmas ne'er dawned upon a group more
 happy.

The last heard was the humming of a banjo
 And Isom singing of a banjo solo:

BANJO SOLO.

Ole Peter wuz a fisherman,

A-fishin' in de sea,

Ole Peter wuz a fisherman,

Way down in Galilee;

Ole Noah wuz a sailor

An' sailed upon de ark;

An' Jonah, de missionary,

Swallowed down de shark.

De wurl wuz made in six days

An' finished on de sebeth,

An' de apples an' de pears wur ripe

By January de lebenth.

De lions and de lambs, dey

All snuggled up tergedder

When de clouds begin to lower,

An' it looked like rainy wedder;

An' it rained forty days and nights

Perzactly by de countin',

An' landed Noah's ark upon

De Aleghany mountain.

De sarpent was de wisest
 Uv all ole Adam's beastes,
 Kep er creepin' an' er crawlin'
 Ter all de plays an' feastes,
 Until he fooled ole Mudder Ebe
 An' made her eat de apple.
 Dat made de lion eat de lam'
 An' de hawks de chickens grapple.

In de happy lan' uv Canaan,
 Ercross de ribber Jordan,
 De Hebrew children squatted,
 An' whipped de Injuns 'cordin'
 Ter de promises uv Moses,
 Who stole 'em from de Gypters,
 Whar dey had ter work like niggers,
 Ez dey tell us in de scripters.

Eber since de wurl begun,
 Dars bin er lot uv trouble;
 De poor folks haz ter work an' toil
 Ter make de pot ter bubble,
 An' de preachers all wud starve ter deatTh

If twasn't fur de sinners;
 De parsons mus' hab chicken pie
 An' puddin' fur dar dinners.

SPRING.

See our beautiful farms when winter is over,
 The forests in bud, the meadows in clover—
 When the teams pull the plows the farmer is
 bringing

His herd to the fields, where music is ringing
 With carol of birds and humming of bees,
 To Æolian harps that play in the breeze—
 Where butterflies flit on bright golden wings,
 And nature is full of earth's beautiful things,
 With the sun, moon and stars a-shining above
 On a beautiful world God gave us to love!
 Yes, love the good world, love one another!
 Man loves his family, his father and mother,
 His sister and brother, his neighbor and friend—
 He begins life with love—loves on to the end.
 Faith, Hope and Love to mortals are given,
 With a promise of life and a haven in Heaven.
 When life's wintry season is over, we'll rest

Where we meet those we love, in the home of
the blest.

When springtime is gone and summer has
come,

We still can be happy in love of our home,
Where lovers can meet in cool, shady bowers,
Festooned all with vines and fragrant with
flowers,

Where woman's fair fingers bright garlands
entwine

To crown a brave hero or lay on a shrine,
Or give to a lover, because they refine.

The spirit of love in the heart is divine!

Bless'd be our Southland—its bright, sunny
hours !

Rejoice in its sunshine, its loves, fruits and
flowers!

There is nothing so sad in this old world of ours
That cannot be cheered by love, music and
flowers.

We make our own sorrows, the evils of fate,
When we take in our hearts malice, envy, and
hate.

There is good in the world, and we may be sure
 That a heart full of love will keep the soul pure.
 When we cross death's dark river, and reach
 the bright shore,
 Beloved ones will greet us and welcome us o'er.
 And while it is given to dwell on this earth,
 No matter where may be the land of our birth,
 Our duty to God is to do all we can,
 Be true to our country, love our fellow man.

SUMMER.

Sweet land of the South, when the summer sun
 shines,
 And soft breezes sing thro' the tall yellow pines,
 Covering the earth with a carpet of tines,
 Where the hard and soft wood together combine
 And the song of the saw is, "God's gifts are
 divine,"
 And it's folly to work and lay up earth's
 treasures
 If you do not enjoy it's God-given pleasures!
 It is right to be happy, tho' sorrows may come

And spread their dark shadows over our home,
Over the Southland there is light from above,
And a Lethe to tears in God's promise of love.
When we leave this dear world for another on
high,

Tho' sleeping in death, the soul can not die.
Our bodies will rest in the ground like the
grain.

There is no death, for we know we will rise up
again.

The seed that the farmer plants in the ground
Will burst forth in glory when summer comes
round;

From one little grain will arise from its bed
A tall stalk of corn with a gold tasseled head,
Like the shower of gold by Jupiter poured
On the tresses of Danae in prison secured,
On the corn's silken tresses in a shower of gold
Falling from the tassel the polen, behold!
The shuck on the cob like the Knights' visors
Cover white grains like infant incisors
Growing unseen, while they make from the
clods

Sweet roasting ears, a feast for the gods!
The Ambrosial nectar in cups Hebe fill'd
Could never compare with our corn juice
distill'd,
A most useful medicine properly used,
Yet, a bane to mankind whenever abused.
When corn fields are clad in rich verdure in
June,
The mocking bird sings all the night to the
moon;
The moon sheds her smiles on this sweet world
of ours,
When her beams kiss the dews and the dews
kiss the flowers.
When morning's bright sun drives the stars to
the shades,
The darkey's loud voice is heard in the glades;
When he reaches the field, to chopping he goes,
Keeping time with a song to the click of the
hoes,
Not singing alone, there are others before us
Who join in the song when he comes to the
chorus.

The voices of singers in mournfulest strain
Fall soft on the ear in sweetest refrain.
Soon springtime is gone like a beautiful dream,
And summer comes in on a bright sunny beam.
While the North seems the fairest when covered with snow,
The South is most charming when soft zephyrs blow,
The seasons that march in their annual round
Bring life in their sunbeams to seed in the ground.
Happy the farmer who leans on his hoe,
Watching in summer the cotton plant grow!
Glorious cotton, that each season charms,
Changing to gardens of beauty our farms!
In the culture of art, and the science of peace,
Gives labor to thousands as factories increase
From the man in the yawl to the sail and steamboat
Employs more men than all navies afloat.
All the troops that march under foreign kings' flags

As well as our own are clothed from our bags.
Conquering the world with a banner of peace,
Her victories in commerce never can cease!
With the strength of a giant it bursts from its
 bed,
Casting the heavy clods off from its head;
Like a young quail that starts with its shell on
 at birth,
It lifts the seed hull on its head from the earth,
Beginning life's battle with vermin and cold,
It struggles for life until gathered and sold.
Squares form like a chrysalis in their soft cells,
Where a lily-white flower in infancy dwells.
The first day it blooms arrayed all in white,
Then, closing its petals, retires for the night,
Rising next morning fresh from its bed,
Discarding its white robe, is dressed all in red,
Then, from the squares that gave it its birth,
It drops its dead blossom at eve to the earth,
While from its place in squares it enfold
A fine textile fabric in egg-shapen bolls.
When frost-laden winds are beginning to blow,

The white cotton covers the fields like a snow,
The flowers in their beauty are nipped in their
bloom

When kissed by the North wind, and sent to
their doom!

Then comes the gold king, like a Turk in his
pride,

And bears her away like a Circassian bride.

Fair bride of the Southland, in a slave market
sold,

Comes back to her people in purple and gold!

When they forced her to wed the prince of the
loom,

She conquered the world as well as the groom!

Her beautiful hair, like Arachne's fair tresses,
Beat the Goddess of Wisdom in weaving of
dresses;

Tho' changed by the Goddess into a dark spider,
Still she weaves her white thread and there's
none to deride her.

No fabric from loom on this earth can compare
To her value when woven, her beautiful hair!

THE OLD BLACK MAMMY.

'Tis easy to wander off from my theme
When traveling over the ground;
Thro' evergreen pastures across the bright
stream
When in fancy I wander around,
And see in the picture which never grows older
Tho' age chills the blood which never grows
colder.

In fancy I see those good negroes again
I loved in the days long ago,
As they worked in the fields of cotton and grain
And sung as they chopped with the hoe;
I can never forget, wherever I roam
The scenes of my childhood and home.

The dear old Black Mammy, so gentle and
tender,
So faithful and true to her trust—
I loved her so well I dared not offend her;
She is gone, yet I honor her dust.
From the wells of my heart arise tears of regret;

Tho' she sleeps 'neath the sod, I can never
forget.

She was lovely to me in her colored bandanna
With which she turbaned her head,
Her songs were far sweeter than flute or piano
As she put me to sleep in my bed;
Her soft crooning voice I can never forget,
Like an angel in dreams, she comes to me yet.

THE PROTRACTED MEETING.

The negroes sing through the long summer
days,
And the fields and the woods are filled with
their lays.

When summer is hottest in month of July,
The negroes are happy; their crops are laid by,
But time with the negro never is fleeting.
When summertime comes, his joy is a meeting,
Which, by the negroes, is called a *protracted*,
But, by the white folks, best known as
distracted.

In praying and shouting they cut such strange
antics,

'Twould seem to a stranger the wildest of
frantics.

A rustic brush arbor made a shade
Under which long planks were laid,
Carpeted with straw beneath their feet,
These planks on logs were made to seat
The negroes from the old plantation,
And members of the congregation.
A pulpit of material crude,
Did not appear unseemly rude,
Before which a long bench they laid
Where mourning sinners knelt and prayed.
The minister then calmly rose,
Cleared his throat, assumed a pose,
Looked down upon the congregation.
There was a flutter of sensation
As he cast his glance around
To view the people on the ground.
He raised a hymn, the usual way,
Then had them all kneel down and pray,
Then read a chapter, took his text;
A glowing sermon followed next.

He pictured all the joys of Heaven,
The shining gates, the peaceful haven,
Mansions of bliss, and joys eternal,
Compared them with the woes infernal.
His voice arose with force and ire
As he portrayed the liquid fire
Where imps and devils, in the middle,
Were dancing to old Satan's fiddle—
That all the dancers in the world
Would in this lake of fire be hurled.
The hottest place in hell below
Was where the fiddlers all would go.
The dancers would be doomed to waltz
In hell for dancing, and such faults;
Unless they prayed to be forgiven,
They'd never see the gates of Heaven!
His voice rose to the highest pitch;
His eloquence was rare and rich.
With tone and gesture wild cavorting,
He thus continued his exhorting:
"Com ter de altar, sinners; turn,
Ur in de fiah uv hell you'll burn!

How duz yer sinners dar ter falter?
Git on yer knees erroun' dis altar!
When yer gits dar, we'll sing an' pray
De Lord ter wash yer sins away.
Sing louder, brudders, git up highar,
An' save dese sinful souls from fiah!"
And as they sung he louder talked,
As up and down the aisles he walked,
And thus he raised a great sensation
'Mong negroes from the old plantation.
And others, from the farms around,
Knelt at the bench upon the ground;
Brothers and sisters gathering there
Joined in singing and in prayer.
You'd have thought for truth the devil routed
When a woman jumped the bench and shouted,
At which the minister asserted:
"Another sinful soul converted."
I can't remember now the song,
Although they sung it loud and long.
With negroes making such a fuss,
I remember it as running thus:

“Shout, shout, the devil’s about;
Glory hallelujah!
Open the door and kick him out!
Glory hallelujah!”
One of the sisters, shouting loud,
Sprang from her seat among the crowd,
And, leaping over logs and benches,
Careless of corns on other wenches,
And kicking as she walked the floor,
She kicked the devil out the door.
Being no doorway in the arbor,
She missed the devil, kicked the barber,
Who fell among the mourners ’round,
Groveling in terror on the ground.
The devil of her imagination
Created another great sensation.
Some were shouting, others groaning
Around the altar of the mourning.
By this meeting long protracted,
The Christmas ills were counteracted:
The devil now had lost his stock;
The parson had regained his flock;

Of character and friends bereft,
Horace and Isom alone were left;
By priest and congregation scorned
The poor musicians were suborned,
Until they could no longer falter,
Fell on their knees around the altar.
Vice often comes from cowardice;
They had to make a sacrifice.
Scowled on by negroes on the place,
Like pariahs outcast from their race.
The parson wearing bran-new clothes,
With funds that from his hat arose,
And they in rags of desolation,
Avoided by the whole plantation,
Horace his much loved fiddle smashed.
And by it Isom's banjo crashed,
Their fragments scattered on the ground
No more their dulcet tones to sound.
While at the sight they nearly fainted,
By converts they were almost sainted.
Policy may not always sin;
Yet, the partition's rather thin

Between our own avowed theocracy
And our brothers' weak democracy.
Intolerance, since the world began,
Has been a tyrant over man,
Ruling by force a small plantation
As in the courts of a great nation.
Democracy brings men on a level;
Intolerance drives them to the devil.
The history of the world has taught,
It clips the pinions of free thought
That might have soared up to the skies,
Or made an earthly paradise.
The parson now no longer hurled
Anathema's against the world—
His congregation all won back,
And Satan beaten off the track.
Then, he proudly there asserted,
Every sinner was converted,
The way was open to salvation
To all upon the old plantation.

THE EXPERIENCE MEETING.

The parson now sends forth his greeting
With call for an experience meeting,
At church upon the Sabbath next,
He rose, but did not take a text,
And to the congregation said:
'Bruderin, I wuz sore erfraid,
Dat I wrastled and I prayed,
Fer my flock uv sheep had strayed!
The devil sure got up a ruction
Ter lead my people ter destruction.
Horace an' Isom sure wuz lost,
An' my soul wuz tempest tossed.
When by the mourners' bench I wept,
I wuz so tired dat I slept,
An', ez I wrastled in my prayer,
I saw two angels enter dare.
I seed dem over mourners lean.
Dis wuz a wishan dat I seen—
Wut I tells you am no story—
Dey converted dem two souls ter glory.
Uncle Jesse, you're a man uv sense!

Just gin to us your 'sperience."

UNCLE JESSE.

With dignity old Jess arose,
Spit in his hat, and wiped his nose.
"Brederen," said he, "I'se had er tranh
One day when lying by de branch,
An', all alone, I pray'd erloud,
An', ez I looked, I seed er cloud,
An', ez I cast my eyes up higher,
I seed a chariot ob fiah!
'T wuz Gabriel driv dem horses round
An' lit wid Jesus on de ground.
Den Jesus turn'd an' smilin' sweet,
Sez he, 'Uncle, wont yer take a seat?'
Sez I, 'Scuse me mahsr; I'se er nigger,
An' my ole close wud cut a figger!
Dat coach an horses am too fine
Fer a nigger ter ride behine!
Den Jesus sed, 'Ole man, git in!
I'se dun forgive yer all yer sin.'
Den I climb'd in very umble,
Kaze I'se erfeared dat I might tumble.

An' dar sat Gabe, ez I'se erlive!
 Dat angel cum erlong ter drive.
 Den Jesus sed, 'It's past erleben;
 By twelve o'clock we'll be in Heben.
 Drive up, Gabe, dusn't like de smell;
 Dis place, hit seems too close ter hell!
 An, ez de horses dash'd erlong,
 I raised my voice an sung dis song:
 'Oh, my soul mounted higher,
 On a chariot of fire,
 And the world it was under my feet.'
 When we passed thro' de gate ez I'd been told,
 De chariot roll'd over bricks uv gold,
 I seed all de angels wid bright golden wings,
 An' a world all a shinin' wid beautiful things!
 I tuck off my hat, ez I thought, but I found
 My ole hat wuz changed to er bright golden
 crown!
 I stepped on de pavement so slick I fell down,
 An' when I erriz, I wuz here on de groun!,
 But, brederen, I know dat my sins ar forgiven,
 Kaze de Lord Jesus tuck me in a tranch up
 ter Heaven."

OILY TONSO.

Oily Tonso, the barber, was the next that arose,
Displaying the dude in the cut of his clothes,
Which showed to perfection his shape and his
figure;

For Oily was not altogether a nigger.

His nose, it was flat like a yellow tomato,
Which marked him a negro, although a mulatto.
His hair, long and cripsy, was tastefully laid,
Which smelt of Macassar, the oil of his trade.
He smiled as he rose with a look of decision
And said, "My dear brudders, I, too's, had a
wizhan;

I drempt I had died an went ter de gate.

I was skeer'd when I knocked, for I thought I
wuz late.

Ole Peter, de keeper, holler'd, 'Whose dar?'

Sez I, 'Oily Tonso, de barber from far!'

Sez he, 'Wuz yer er Christian in de days uv
yer youth?

Wuz yer honest an' alers stuck ter de trufe?'

I answered 'I wuz, ez fer ez I know.'

Jes den I heard an ole rooster crow.
 Peter laffed ez he sed, 'Yer miserable liar!
 My ole rooster says yer shud burn in hellfire!
 Altho' de ole cock is two thousand years old,
 He always would crow when he heard a lie told.
 Now, Oily Tonso, for once tell de trufe.
 Wasn't yer a liar an' thief from yer youth?'
 'I'se pray'd fer forgiveness, please, Mahsr Peter;
 I knows dat I'se been de mos' sinfulest creeter.'
 Des den a hen cackled, an' ole Peter said:
 'When dat hen hears de trufe, a fresh egg is
 laid.'

Den Peter sed, solemn: 'Dat gibs yer er chance,
 Go back ter de wurl an' don't lie er dance;
 Be er good Christian, ervoidin' all sin,
 An' de gate will be open wen yer cums back
 ergin.'

SISTER CARLINE.

Then Sister Carline took the floor,
 Kick'd the sand-filled cuspidor,
 Then laid aside her box of snuff,
 Pull'd down her gown, roll'd up the cuff:

"Brederen an' sisters, I'se, too, had trances.
 Since I jined de church, I'se quit de dances.
 I'se gwine ter 'gin my testamentaries,
 Togedder wid my sentamentaries.
 I had er wizhan, it mout been er dream:
 My spirit wuz floatin' away, it seem.
 I had hearn much of Sodom^a in the town of
 Gomorrah,
 An' I thought I was leabin' dese low lands uv
 sorrow.

I crossed de dark ribber, an' had not ter wait,
 De angels ter meet me cum out er de gate;
 An' de fus' one I met, do, I didn't know
 Wuz a plantation nigger—ole Uncle Joe!
 We entered de city, dar wuz er great light;
 An' lo an' behold! Uncle Joe had turn'd white!
 Sez he: 'Glad ter see yer, Sister Carline!
 You's cum up ter Heaben lookin' so fine!
 Sez I: 'Uncle Joe, eberything seems so strange.
 How cum yer so white, an' whut made de
 change?'
 Uncle Joe laffed an' sed, 'Dat's er joke!'

An' I know'd it wuz trufe, de word dat he
spoke.

Says he: 'Sister Carline, I tells yer de fack,
De niggers ar white here, de white folks ar
black;

An' dars our ole Massar, he now drives my
carriage.

I drove for his wife soon arter dar marriage.

You'll see de ole missus; I wants yer ter look
An' see how she's changed since I took her ter
cook.

Wen dey cum ter de gate dey like not ter got in;
Fer dey thought at de big house dat dancin's
no sin.

I put in a word, an' it had de effeck

Uv 'em lookin' ter see if de books wur korreck;

Dey balanced de books, korrecked de figgers:

Do dancin' wuz wrong, dey wuz good ter de
niggers!

'Whose dem yaller angels?' an' Uncle Joe sed:

'Dem's de good Injuns—dey's good wen dey's
ded!

Dey all changes color in Heaben's bright light:
 De white folks ar black and de niggers ar
 white.

Wen de nigger cums thro' de celestial gate,
 His color turns white an' his har it gits straight.
 Wen de white folks git in dey ar none de less
 happy,

Do dar color is black, an' dar har it am nappy.
 Since yer lef' on de yearth yer folly an' pride,
 Cum git in my carriage, an' we'll take a ride.
 I rides in my carriage, I perfers it ter wings,
 Do I's got 'em at home; dey is beautiful things!
 I'll now show yer all de beauties of Heaven.

Dar's none wicked here, dar sins ar forgiven;
 No sinners up here, dey ar sent ter de devil,
 An' all uv us Christians am on de same level,
 No title of generals, kernals, or chiefs,
 No creeds to disturb us, we'ze de same in be-
 liefs,

We'ze all uv us equals, jes sisters an' brudders,
 In de mansion uv bliss, one ez good az de
 tothers.

De cushions so soft we's rode all erround,
 It seemed like er dream, I wuz sleepin' so sound
 Dat wen I woke up I wuz back here agin
 Ter lib out my days in dis cold wurl uv sin."

FIDDLER HORACE.

Fiddler Horace got up when Carline had done.
 "Bruderin," he said, "my dream wuz no fun!
 My conscience wuz hurtin', fur sins I suppose;
 Fer dat haz grown seedy ez well as my clothes.
 I don't kno de difference twixt wizhns an'
 trances,

But I know it ar wicked ter fiddle fer dances.
 It are no happy wizhn dat I hez ter tell;
 I dreamt dat I died an' went down ter hell,
 An' dar wuz ole Satan, his tail stickin' out,
 Says he, 'Come in Horace! wut yer been erbout?
 Open wide de gate an' let de fiddler in;
 He's a fine recruit jes from a world uv sin!
 Preachers are gittin' too numerous to tell,
 But fiddlers like Horace are very scarce in hell.
 When Parson Johnson cums we're gwine ter
 gin a ball;

He's de biggest liar an' hypocrite uv all.'

'He'll never cum', sez I, 'nor be by God deserted,

For I ken testify by him I wuz converted.'

'Dat meetin',' said de debil, 'I, too, attended,

An' here's yer fiddle dat I picked up an' mended.

So tune it up and rub some rosin on yer bow.

Dars lots uv dancers here I'd like fer you ter know.'

'Git behind me, Satan,' I answered pat an' quick,

An' he sure did git behind, an' gin me sich a kick

Wid his ole cloven foot dat I fell on de floor,

An' busted dat ole fiddle wus den it wuz before!

'Don't yer quote scripter here, an' its no use to pray;

Now, here's another fiddle—jes take holt an' play!'

De debil's imps and dragons had all kum in fer fun,

An' de all firedist racket yer eber hearn begun.

Jes den Lord Jesus entered, an' Satan he most
fainted,

Wen Jesus sez, 'How dars yer, Satan, bother
one I've sainted?'

'Good Lord,' sez Satan, 'I thought dat all de
trade

Uv fiddlers fer hell erspecially wur made.'

'Yer ole liar an' father uv all de liars!

Yer knows he's 'pinted harper uv all de heb-
enly choirs!'

Den he pull'd out a whip uv scoropins an' fell
On Satan an' his imps and lash'd em over hell;
Satan jump'd in de fiah an' kick'd up de ashes,
Tryin' ter git erway frum de Lord Jesus'
lashes;

Den de imps an' dragons each tuck ter his hole.

I seed de door lef open an' out uv dar I stole.

No race hoss eber made such time erpon a track
Ez fiddler Horace made on his way er gittin'
back.

I prays de Lord I'll never git in such a scrape.

I tells you, brudders, it wuz er mighty close
escape."

BANJO ISOM.

Banjo Isom arose. "Bruderin," said he,
"Dars ben no such things as tranches fer me;
Fer I wuz born wid er caul on my face,
Which is not ertall common to one uv my race.
I haz er gif only natur ken make,
I ken see spirits wen I's erwake.
I haz de gif uv healin' erflictions
In sores er in wounds, dars no restrictions.
My daddy died erfore I wuz born'd erwhile
An' dat made me born'd er orphan chile.
I wuz de sebeth son uv er sebeth son.
De udder six am libin' all but one.
Dar's de greates' vartu in de number seben;
God made de wurl in six days an' went up ter
heaben,
An' dar He rested on de sebeth day.
De niggers like it best de odder way:
Dey rest de sebeth, all de week dey play.
Dar wuz seben days and seben nights,
Seben candles an' seben lights,
Dar's de seben stars; yer sees but six uv dem;

De odder showed de way ter Bethlehem,
An' dat's de way de wise men wuz able
Ter find de baby Savior in de stable.
Las' week er naber's chile fell in the flah,
We sebeth sons don't use our gifts fur hire!
I tended it, an' nex day, got er letter,
Its fader sed de chile wuz doin' better.
We sebeth sons don't eber keer fer wealth,
Dey only breathes on dem de breth uv health.
But den er doctor M. D. kum er long
An' sed dat I wuz doin' mighty wrong.
He tole dem folks de banjo-picker lied;
Den gin de chile some phyic an' it died!
At night ez I walks out er trabin' roun',
I sees dem spirits creepin' on de groun',
I sees em kaze I wuz born'd wid er caul,
I sees wut tother folks can't see at all.
Sometimes dey cums erroun' erbout twilight;
I ken see em almost ebery night,
Ez specially in de darkness uv de moon,
Some cums erroun' errackin' like er coon,
Sum uv 'em bout ez tall ez er big dog.

Dar's one I sees like a monsrous bull-frog,
An' ebery time dat evil spirit jumps,
He picks erpon er banjo an' he tumps.
His music wuz so bad, I thought I'd show
Dat debil how ter play on dat banjo;
Den I membered de parson tole ter me,
'Desist de debil an' from you he'll flee'.
I's quit de banjo an' its works uv evil;
Darfo I's able ter desist de debil.
I sing no mo' de songs uv worldliness,
But only hymns dat de good Lord will bless.
I tells yer all dem music insterments
Ar devices de debil hisself invents;
An' his purpose you heard Brudder Johnson
 tell
Ar jes ter lead poor sinners down ter hell.
Yer ken not see dem spirits ez I does,
But you sometimes may hear dem devils buzz
A still small voice dat you may often hear,
Softly whisperin' evil in yer ear.
Perhaps you may believe its yer own self dat
 thinks

When tempted by dis debil ter take drinks,
An' you may think its your own heart dat longs
Ter dance ergin an' sing dose worldly songs;
But its dem spirits whisperin' very low,
As soft an' sweet ez Horace's fiddle bow,
An' dem deductive notes I play'd on de banjo.
I am myself by dem devils sorely tried,
But now I knows I's safe, for I's sanctified!
I know my callin' an election sho',
Since I denounced de devil and de banjo!"

The meeting closed with songs of praise,
As summer pass'd, those mournful lays,
And monotony of sacred songs
Were wearing on those youthful throngs
Who pick'd the white locks from the stalks,
Wearied of old folks' solemn talks.
Those youthful spirits full of glee,
Whose natures struggled to be free,
Felt a desire to break the chain
That link'd them to each sad refrain.
When autum winds began to moan,
And freshened with a livelier tone.

The leaves were dancing in the trees,
To pinetop fiddles in the breeze,
Dressed in colors that would vie
With tints of beauty in the sky;
And everywhere the eye could range,
Dame Nature's self had seemed to change;
For, as the year was growing old,
The hickory trees were dressed in gold.
When forests changed their dress of green,
The gums put on a purple sheen;
To suit the season's growing cold,
The oaks were clad in bronze and gold;
In varied shades of green and yellow,
There hung persimmons ripe and mellow;
The grape vine in rich festoons swung,
Where ripening grapes in clusters hung.
Rejoicing in the woodland's free
Carol of birds and song of bee;
The lark sang as he swung and swayed
On slender weed down in the glade;
The brown thrush singing loud and clear,
His every note a voice of cheer;

The plaintive cooing of the dove
Had in its voice a tone of love.
The mockingbird, tho' plainly dressed,
Had, in its song, as if in jest,
A medley, stolen from all the rest,
Of songs that made the woodland gay,
From thrush and lark, from dove and jay,
And flocks of birds in every tree,
All singing loud their songs of glee
That filled the air with melody.
The wonder is why 'twas not given
To make our beauteous earth a heaven,
Since every tone in Nature's voice
Bids the creature, man, rejoice;
Since bird and bee and singing tree
Tell him how happy he might be
If Christian worship could be free
From creeds that shackle liberty!
The Creator's plan did not intend
The negro's mind should comprehend
The lesson that our scriptures teach,
Which thro' his skull can never reach.

The negro gives but little heed
To churches, laws, or Christian creed.
Born but to service and obey,
His nature bows to white man's sway.
Education only makes a fool
Of creatures never born to rule.
His mingling by amalgamation
Would soon destroy our civilization;
For, he becomes a beast of prey
When loos'nd from the white man's sway;
Nor has he made in all the ages
A monument on history's pages!
Those tropic isles that gem the sea
Were lost to lands that set them free.
The votaries of a God that's true
Bow to the Baal of Voudou,
Where only summer's zephyrs blow,
Where fruits and flowers in beauty grow,
Where sun and moon and starbeams shine
Upon a land that seems divine!
If Christian governments were wise,
They'd make those isles a paradise;

Teach them to own the just control
Of Christian nations with a soul,
These facts make many people doubt
If this dark beast be not without
The immortality that was given
When God created man in Eden.
The true worship of God is in deeds;
For, religion consists not in creeds.
The Christian Knight under shield,
Met Saracen Knight on the field.
The Crusades did nothing avail
In search of the myth Holy Grail.
The veil of the temple was rent
And the host of each army was spent.
Each called the other deceivers;
Neither one in the other believers.
Whatever men think or pray for,
Each thinks his own creed the safer.
The Catholic Church builds its hope
On their creed an infallible pope.
By protestants this is denied,
And each thinks that the other has lied;

Some sprinkle, some pour, some immerse,
And each thinks that the other is worse.
From the ranks of both Christian and Jew
The devil will sure get his due!
They all alike fail in their deeds,
Laid down in the laws of their creeds.
They repent of their past sins in sorrow,
And commit the same sins on to-morrow!
The Moslem, too, believes he is right;
For the same thing the Christian will fight!
Christ gave us a far better creed;
It was to help one another in need.
His commandment of "Love one another"
Would make of the whole world a brother.
Our Savior's is the best of all creeds,
When follow'd by Charity's deeds.
They must quit the idol they chase—
Not a calf, but a fair woman's face,
The idol they greedily follow,
Stamped on the Almighty dollar.

The sceptic may think that we dream
In wandering off from our theme.

We'll return to the old plantation,
 Where the negro is in his right station.
 Without conscience for his evil deeds,
 He comprehends no Christian creeds.
 Unfitted for civilization,
 His religion is but a sensation.
 Even in this enlightened land,
 No pang of conscience stays his hand;
 His only care is to escape
 The law for murder, theft, or rape.
 When all are converted religion grows stale:
 Satan is routed and no sins to bewail.

Down by a brook in a sweet flowery glade,
 Where a gnarl'd sycamore spread its wide shade,
 And the sun set in clouds of red, purple and dun,
 While the young moon and stars dance in the run
 Of the clear little brook, our musicians sat
 On the soft mossy bank; and this was their
 chat:

"Isom," said Horace, "has yer seen gwine
 erroun'

Dem spirits yer tole uv at de big meetin'
 groun'?"

“Wut fer yer ax dat?” said Isom, grinning;

“Dat’s wen we boff ergreed ter quit sinning.

If yer sees one uv dem wid er new violin

Jis ax ’im ter try fiddler Horace ergin!”

“Horace, wuz yer lyin’ wen we all hearn yer
tell

Erbout de wishn yer had wid de debil in hell?”

“I wuz jes like de res’. Whar’s dem spirits
yer seed?”

“I haint seen none since, kaze dar’s bin no
need.

De parson, de champion liar uv us all,

When he sed he seed angels walk down de hall

An’ convert you an’ me, as he erserted,

Yer know mighty well we wuz never converted.

De parson had set all de niggers ergin us,

An’ we had ter jine parson, devil, and sinners!

De fact ’twuz de fashion erbout dat erwhile,

But religion is thinner an’ now’s out uv style,

An’ we, like two fools, bust in de middle

Uv dat dusty road our banjo an’ fiddle!

Wut’s we gwine ter do ter get us some udders?

Money is scarce 'mong us Christian brudders.
 I've an ole sow an' pigs an' dem pigs will squeal,
 But de money'll cum back wen we get's up a
 reel.

Isom mus' hab a banjo an' dat Jarsy heifer
 Will go fer er banjo ez soon ez I ketch her."

Softly the night wind sighs through the trees,
 When voices of negroes are borne on the breeze,
 Mournfully singing a sad lamentation
 For the fiddle and banjo lost to the plantation.

Farewell ter de fiddle an' de bow!
 Do we sing it sad an' low?
 De bow am bent an' de fiddle am broke,
 An' my heart is rent by de dreadful stroke!
 Farewell ter de fiddle an' de bow!

My heart am tore, my feelin's sore,
 For we'll neber hear dat fiddle no more.
 Farewell ter de fiddle an' de bow,
 Likewise de ole banjo!

No more you'll hear it hum
 When de happy Christmas cum
 For de preacher did say

Dat de debil gits erway
 Wid de nigger if he play
 Wid de fiddle an' de bow
 An' de ole banjo.

A woodpecker settin' on a dead tree limb,
 He look'd at me an' I look'd at him,
 He tapped it loud an' he tapped it low,
 An' it 'minded me much uv de ole banjo!
 Dar wus music in de tree
 An' it seemed ter say ter me,
 Dey tole me 'twus er sin
 Fer ter play de violin;
 An' Horace is lamentin' fer de fiddle an' de
 bow,
 An' Isom is er grieving for de ole banjo.

NEGRO CHARACTERISTICS.

The autum is coming; the summer is gone;
 The brown leaves are falling upon the green
 lawn;
 The weeds in the meadows look seedy and sober,
 Chill'd by the dews of cold nights in October.

Cotton's the trade that most negroes follow;
It's surest to bring in the Almighty dollar.
"E Pluribus Unum" is stamp'd on its rim,
Meaning many in one, that is, three crops for
him.

The first crop that opens hangs low to the earth;
The second's the middle round stalks like a girth;
The third is the top, unless it grows fast
The frost King will kill it the first winter's
blast.

The frost-bitten boll turns dark and then sours;
It is wither'd and dead in a very few hours.
The negro by nature can never despair;
He lives in the present, gives the future no care;
The white man must feed him regardless of loss,
The burden of care always falls on "the boss."
When the cotton bolls open early in fall,
The laborers gather, men, women, and all,
The boys and the girls with baskets in rows,
Gather the low locks while the top blossom
grows.

They are merry and happy, their voices are
ringing

With laughter and songs, they work best when
singing,

Not those long metre tunes, Oh, tell it not!

Parson Johnson will moan for those sad hymns
forgot.

The negroes by nature love notoriety;

They know nothing of caste in each other's
society.

When a negro's convicted, and serves out his
time,

No one seems to care for or remember his
crime;

When returning from prison a welcome he'll
find,

Not one of his race speaks a word that's unkind.

In slavery he was seldom, if ever, insane;

Now the study of books is too much for his
brain.

His mind, through ages by ignorance shrouded,
Gives way to the pressure of learning, when
crowded.

Flattery fills his head with conceit;

Too ignorant to know when he meets with
defeat.

If invited to speak it makes him feel proud,
 Nor is he abash'd at facing a crowd
 Of most cultured scholars. He's ready to prove
 That the world's standing still, "an' de sun it
 do move."

If he has a want he will not deny it,
 He has but one thought, "Has he money to
 buy it?"

If he goes on the market with products to sell,
 What he's willing to take he never can tell;
 Nor is he a miser, wise men have said it,
 He'd buy up the state, if sold on a credit!
 Let us back to the field, there is no use to
 reason,

The negro is in his right place at this season.
 Of his characteristics Southerners know it,
 But the North will not list to a Southern born
 poet.

NEGRO SUPERSTITIONS.

We'll change the scene, if not the theme;
 Things are not always what they seem.

Aunt Mandy, in spite of daily cares,
The pickers frugal meal prepares.
She also invitations sends
To numbers of her color'd friends,
All whom she banters for a tilt
In sewing on a crazy quilt,
But fails to send an invitation
To Huldy, witch of the plantation.
The slight excited Huldy's ire,
Who threatened her with vengeance dire.
Uncle Jesse, coming with his load
Of cotton, met Huldy in the road;
Smiling, she offer'd him a cake,
Saying 'twas best that she could bake.
Just then, a lizzard on the ground,
Made Uncle Jesse jump around.
He ate the cake and, laughing, said,
Of vermin he was much afraid.
Aunt Mandy's supper was too rich,
Yet he insisted 'twas the witch
That gave him such a wracking pain,
'Gainst which he struggl'd all in vain;

He swore it was old Huldy's cake,
Nor would he doctor's physic take.
After he' made a diagnosis,
The doctor tried by every process
To make him swallow pill or lotion,
Of which ole Jesse had no notion,
And told the doctor, when he died
He'd find a lizzard in his hide!
It was a serious condition,
Tho' only a negro superstition.
The doctor left, and there they took
To nurse him back mammy Sukey, cook,
Who nursed and physic'd white folk's babies,
But could not cure a case of rabies.
Uncle Jesse's case seemed very bad;
She fear'd that he was going mad;
She tried both lotion and massage,
But nothing could the pain assuage.
Aunt Sukey had a kindly face,
The gentlest nature on the place.
She always had the confidence
Of white folks; they had common sense.

But with believers in witchcraft,
At which white folks only laugh'd,
Negroes are very superstitious
And of their race always suspicious,
So, Aunt Sukey call'd to see
What she could do with old Huldry.
Of witches Sukey had no fear.
Her voice was full of hope and cheer.
Her tone so kind none could resist her,
Greeting her, "Good morning, sister!
I'se glad ter see yer! I hopes you'se well!
I've somethin' dat I want's ter tell.
I'se in much trouble 'bout er friend.
Whose life, I fear, mus' shortly end.
Jesse, my nabor, is like a brudder,
An' one good turn deserves anudder.
An' if Mandy haz yer slighted,
Dar is no wrong dat can't be righted;
Because he haz er foslish wife,
It should not cost a good man's life!
Huldry, I want's yer ter remember
How cold it wuz in last December,

Wen snow wuz beatin' in thro' de cracks
Uv dis ere house, I hearn an axe,
Ez on de white folks' porch I stood.
'Twas Uncle Jesse choppin' wood
Which he cut an' hauled ter you,
A favor no one else wud do.
Uncle Jesse haz a kindly heart,
An' alers takes a nabor's part.
I want's yer to go wid me ter night
An' see if we can't get him right."
In every thing in God's creation,
In man or beast, in every nation,
Even among the beasts of prey,
Call it instinct or what you may,
Even the wolf will howl, and groan,
And risk its life to help its own!
In every thing, in nature still,
There's something good as well as ill.
There is a Horeb in all hearts,
If touched by rods of kindness, starts,
And waters of affection flow,
Because God's love hath made them so.

Aunt Sukey's voice was kind and cheerful,
While Huldy's eyes were sad and tearful.
A smile upon her stern face show'd
The rock was struck, the waters flow'd.
Says she, "Aunt Sukey, yee may tell
Uncle Jesse he will soon be well.
Den put a blister on his side
Jes whar he sez de lizzard hide,
Den I'll come meet yer dar ter night,
An' thinks us boff ken make him right."
Aunt Sukey return'd to Uncle Jess
An' said, "I've news yer cannot guess.
Huldy sez she'll come an' cure you,
An' from all witchcraft secure you.
I'se been dar; she's got de stuff
Ter kill de lizzard, an' dat's enuff."
"Don't bring her here, she'll kill me sure!
Witches wuz neber known ter cure.
She kilt dat gal, Malindy Jane,
De white folks sed she wuz insane.
She had some hens settin' in kegs,
An' one wuz sot erpon duck eggs.

She found 'em at Huldy's one month arter—
The ducklin's paddlin' in some water.
She claim'd de hen an' made a fuss,
An' dat is what kick'd up de muss.
She tole her dat 'fore long she'd see
Whut 'twuz ter be a busy bee,
She'd hear bees buzzin' in her head,
An' dey'd keep buzzin' till she's dead.
One night, de gal she dreamt er dream,
An' in it Huldy dar did seem
Ter be er standin' by her bed
An' put her han' beneath her head.
Dey zamin'd an' foun' a witches' ball,
But could'nt tell whut 'twuz er tall.
An' dey neber know'd jes whut it wuz,
But er bee flew roun' an' gan ter buzz;
An' fo de sun went down nex' day,
Malindy Jane had pass'd erway.
Den dar wuz good ole Uncle Jack
Whut ust ter walk wid er bent back,
He sot his dog on Hildy's cow,
An' dat's how dey begin de row.

Huldy got mad an' tole ole Jack
She uz gwineter take erway his track.
Den his feet 'gan swellin' an' gittin' cole,
An' he died jes eighty-two years ole.
Dey 'xamen'd whar he walk'd erroun',
An' not er track could dar be foun'.
When witches take erway de tracks,
Dey's not here long, now dem's de facts."
"I tells yer dar's nuffin' fer yer ter fear
From Huldy, an' when she comes here,
An' do de niggers calls her wizard,
She'll erleabe yer uv dat lizzard.
An' I'se er gwine ter assist her.
Be quiet, while I fix dis blister."
That night, some one knock'd at the door,
And Huldy stepp'd in on the floor.
An' bowing, said: "How is yer all?
Uncle Jesse, I'se jes come ter call.
How is yer doin'? I'se yer friend,
An' wants ter make dis trouble end;
I only wants ter do yer good;
I hain't forgot yer fotch'd me wood.

An' kaze Aunt Sukey call'd me sister,
 I tole her how ter fix yer blister.
 Then with a blade the blister prick'd,
 She from his side the lizzard pick'd,
 That all might see she held it high,
 An' squeez'd it till they saw it die.
 Wriggling as it dying gasped
 In the clutch her fingers clasped,
 She threw it from her on the floor,
 And passed in silence out the door.
 This may seem a strange tale to tell,
 But in a week ole Jess was well!

THE FARMER'S LIFE.

The winter has come; cold frosts of December
 Have blighted the flowers that bloom'd in Sep-
 tember;
 The fruits are all gone that summer had
 mellow'd;
 The green woods are bronz'd by Autumn winds
 yellow'd;
 The corn crops are gathered, the stalks stand-
 ing bare,

Stripp'd of their fodder, no longer a care;
The fields and the meadows by mowers are
 cleaned,
And only the stubble shows where they were
 glean'd.
With cribs full of corn and hay cut and ricked,
The crop is all safe when cotton is picked.
By springtime the stalks will be withered and
 broken,
Entomb'd in the barn the seed will be taken
That, cover'd with earth, they will rise from
 the tomb,
And in a new life in beauty will bloom.
All things in nature bring man the reflection,
He'll arise to new life at the great resurrection.
Tho' winds sweep the earth and snows cover
 the plain,
The flowers will burst forth in beauty again!
Tho' no marble may mark the spot where he
 lies,
The humblest from earth will in glory arise!
Tho' a poet's light fancies may be but a dream,
Kaleidoscope pictures are not what they seem,

Yet are useful as models to make illustrations
Or adorn a bright thought in a poet's creations,
In fancy, I see the old plantation clad
In Autumnal beauties, which now make me sad,
To think, no matter where on earth I roam,
I'll ne'er return to childhood's sweet home!
I see, in dreams, the home that once was mine;
I see the grapes in clusters on the vine;
I hear the pattering nuts and acorns fall,
And overhead I hear the wild fowl call,
From Artic regions, traveling night and day,
On wearied pinion wend their southward way;
I see again, upon this winter night,
The stars that never beamed elsewhere so
bright!

I wonder then in fancy's dreams—but hark!
I hear a sound so cheering—'tis a bark
Of hunting dogs. Perhaps they've struck a
trail.
It's that same old coon with rings around his
tail.
I hear the shouts of hunters cheer the pack

As they cry in chorus on the track,
And voice of negroes in merry conversation,
With cheering shouts of wild anticipation.
How sweet the cry of swiftly running pack!
There's not a chord in music that they lack.
'Tis sweet to hear, when bowed before the
 throne

Of God in worship, the organ's solemn tone!
'Tis sweet to hear the violin and lute,
When harsher instruments of bands are mute!
'Tis sweet to feel the thrill of the cornet
Mingled with trombone and clarinet!
The crash of a full orchestra is grand!
But, there's sweeter music yet that "beats the
 band,"

A more inspiring concord of sweet sounds—
'Tis the glad music of a pack of hounds!
Softer the cadence passing o'er hill and dells!
They are coming! How the rapturous music
 swells!

The intonation of each voice is clear.
Hurrah! Old Mingo leads, they are coming near,

The cries are hush'd; I fear he's got away!
 Hark! boys! they've treed! I hear old Min-
 go's bay.

We gather round the tree with shouts of joy.
 Oh! would I were again a happy boy,
 Coon hunting as in years of long ago,
 Cutting the pigeon wing to Horace's fiddle bow,
 Singing coon songs with Isom's old banjo!
 How happy is the farmer's daily life,
 The pleasant home, bright children, and sweet
 wife!

His cares are joys; he walks among the rows,
 Watching with anxious eye each plant that
 grows,

As it breaks through earth's harden'd crust,
 Rising in beauty from a bed of dust,
 A new and beauteous thing from birth,
 A reminder of God's promise to our earth,
 When washed from sin his rainbow span'd
 the space

'Twixt Heaven and earth, a promise to our race.
 Yet from the curse of the primeval sin,

Labor he must his daily bread to win.
Crops must be till'd with culture and with care,
His only hope for living well next year.
He must protect it from encroaching vines.
Even the morning glory which entwines
Its tendrils round it in its early hours,
Is sacrificed with its bright purple flowers.
The plow and hoe must kill the grass and weed
That otherwise would choke the fruitful seed,
By taking from the cultivated soil
Its nourishment, the farmer's care and toil.
But, when the cares of day are over,
The sweet wife greets the husband lover,
The purest joy that Heaven can bless
A man with is a wife's caress!
And when the moon and stars at night
Feed the growing plants with light,
The trilling notes of the mocking bird
In songs around the house are heard.
When sleep has closed his tired lids
To the lullaby of katydids,
The fragrant breath of bulbs and roses
Perfumes the air, while he reposes.

**MISCELLANEOUS
POEMS**

TOM HOLLIDAY

CAPT. Thomas C. Holliday, of Aberdeen, Miss., a staff officer in Gen. Joe Davis' Brigade, was killed while bearing a message across the battlefield during the desperate engagement in the Wilderness of Virginia, May 6, 1864. Gen. Davis being absent on a visit to Richmond, Col. John M. Stone commanded the brigade and retook, on the second day of the battle, a position from which he had been driven before. The Second Mississippi Regiment (Stone's) commanded by Capt. Thos. J. Crawford, of Pontotoc, lost over half its numbers, and Colonel Stone himself, although severely wounded, refused to leave the field, and 'tis said that he burst into tears as he looked over the field on the bodies of his fallen comrades.

Capt. Tom Holliday was conspicuous for gallantry during the entire engagement, and his fall was deeply regretted by all who knew him, as he was a general favorite. He delivered a

message as he fell from his horse in the manner described in the lines below. Inspired by his subline courage, those brave soldiers again rushed into battle, reinforcing the right and driving the enemy before them as they shouted, "Tom Holliday!"

After the battle Gen. Hill rode up and saluted Col. Stone, saying: "Col. Stone, you have won laurels enough to cover the entire army, and I hope soon to see you rewarded with a major-general's wreath which you so well deserve to wear;" to which the modest soldier replied: "Gen. Hill, I have only done my duty, and if you have any compliments to bestow, give them to those men standing there and their comrades left on the field; they did the fighting and deserve the laurels."

The battle was raging; the shot and shell
Were shrieking and tearing through thickets
of pines,
While the hail of minnie in death's carnival made
Havoc along the Confederate lines.

"Close up!" came the order; the soldiers obeyed
as they

Stepped over the bodies of comrades just slain;

"Close up!" cried the Colonel, regardless of
numbers,

"The order has come, we must charge them
again.

They are turning our flank, and the fate of the
battle

Depends on retaking the ground we have lost."

Well the brave Colonel knew, as he issued the
order,

What taking his former position would cost.

Then those veterans bold, marching shoulder
to shoulder,

Went back to the field where the grape and
the shrapnel

Were tearing the earth with ten thousand death
missiles,

Yet, forward they moved with a wild South-
ern yell.

From out the dark pines, like the rush of a
torrent,

They gallantly charged where the enemy
stood,
Right over the breastworks in face of the
cannon,
Driving treble their number pell mell thro'
the wood;
Tho' they oft tried to rally, giving volley for
volley,
Until their vast columns, tottering reel'd,
Their serried ranks, broken in wildest disorder,
Were swept by our bayonets off from the
field.
Those brave Mississippians retook the breast-
works,
Then sunk down to rest, exhausted and sore,
While the foemen were flying in rout and con-
fusion,
Leaving many behind there to welter in gore.
Begrimed with smoke and dust, sat the Colonel
On his dark steed, and his breast heaved a
groan
As he viewed the sad field, spotted, blue, gray
and gory

Where the best and the bravest by hundreds
were strown,
When up rushed a rider in haste, and his steed
Was covered with foam and his nostrils all
wide
Show'd how he's been ridden for bottom and
speed
By dashing Tom Holliday well had been tried.
He halted a moment, saluted the men,
Who listened to hear what Tom had to tell:
"We are pressed on the right and need help,"
He exclaimed, then reeled in his saddle and
fell,
Fell dead in the arms of those brave Missis-
sippians.
Shot thro' the body, yet, with his last breath,
True to his duty, this gallant young soldier
Delivered his General's order ere death
Could conquer a spirit that cared not for danger
Nor halted a moment, e'en for a death wound,
With a smile on his face as he looked up to
Heaven

The hero lay dead where he fell on the ground.
No time to rest, boys, we've heard Tom's last
order;

Attention, battalion! fall in! make haste!
Right about, doublequick, march! we are press-
ed on

The right, and there's no time to waste.
Sadly they turned from the scene of the con-
flict,

But late in the evening, afar on the right
They shouted his name as they drove back the
foemen.

Tom Holliday's spirit still led in the fight.

[The steed ridden by Capt. Tom Holliday, a
sorrel with a blaze in his face, was the same on
which Gen. Bee was killed in the first great
battle at Manassas. He survived the war, and
was tenderly cared for by the Holliday family
for a number of years, until his death.]

WALTHALL.

THE HERO OF THE ROSE.

ON Missionary's fateful ridge
Where death's shots thickest poured,
And cannon, massed upon our front,
In thunderous volleys roared,
The half-starved soldiers of the South
Closed their depleted ranks
Until the wasted columns reeled,
Pressed on the front and flanks.

Borne backward by a mighty tide,
Like ocean's heaving swell,
They yet carved on scroll of fame
Heroic deeds to tell.

On came the foe's relentless charge
Upon our wavering lines;
With victory flushed, their wild huzzas
Rang through the whispering pines.

A general riding to the front
Upon the mountain side,

Sat like a statue 'mid the hail
Of death, which he defied.
Around him fierce the battle raged,
Yet in his ungloved hand
He held no sword or weapon bright,
But waved to his command

A rose, and held it to his face
To taste its fragrant breath,
A contrast to the sulphurous fumes
Upon that field of death.
Then shouting to his men, "Come on!"
He spurred towards his foes,
And calmly rode 'mid hurtling shells,
Kissing the fragrant rose.

Thrilled by the sight, the men in gray
Closed ranks and faced the blue,
While loud above the battle's roar
There burst a yell that drew
Its inspiration from the rose,
Which, like Navarre's white plume,
The Knightly Walthall waved aloft,
Refreshed by its perfume.

In vain the foemen charged his lines
With overwhelming force,
In vain they left their valor's proof
In many a bleeding corse.
The army's safety was assured,
His veterans slowly drag
Their wearied footsteps to the rear.
A rose saved General Bragg!

Many years have passed and gone
Since that eventful day,
While civic laurels thick and fast
Had crowned his head with gray.
Beside the ones who loved him best
He sleeps beneath the sod.
He lives within his people's hearts;
His spirit's with its God.

[At the battle of Missionary Ridge Walthall's Brigade was left as a forlorn hope to hold the divide and cover the retreat of the Confederate army against the massed force of 80,000 Federal troops. This they accomplished by feats of

daring scarcely paralleled in the annals of modern warfare. Walthall's gallantry was conspicuous during the fight, holding a rose to his face, seemingly regardless of personal danger. His heroic bearing stimulated his brigade to hold their position against fearful odds and perform the miraculous feat of saving Bragg's army and securing their own retreat. Walthall, although severely wounded, never left the field.]

LOCHINVAR.

OLD Lochinvar, Old Lochinvar,
Thou dearest spot on earth to me,
Tho' I may roam in lands afar
My heart will fondly turn to thee.

Old Lochinvar, loved are thy hills,
Thy fields and meadows ever dear,
Dear to my heart thy sparkling rills,
Thy gushing fountains bright and clear.

Oh! for a breath from Lochinvar
I've sighed when in a prison cell,
A Lethe to the prison bar,
Would be a draft from thy sweet well.

Old Lochinvar, sweet are the flowers
That cluster 'round thy walls so gay,
There I have played in childhood's hours,
And dreamed my boyhood years away.

Old Lochinvar, Old Lochinvar,
Thy song-birds sing the sweetest lay;

Never shone sun or moon or star
Elsewhere with half so bright a ray.

Old Lochinvar, Old Lochinvar,
Long may thy tall oaks o'er me wave,
And may the smiling vesper star
Peep through thy shadows on my grave.

WHERE IS MY WANDERING BOY TO-NIGHT?

WHERE is my wandering boy to-night?
An old man sits alone to think
Of cheerful news of home to write;
While dipping pen in stand of ink,
With tearful eye and throbbing heart,
The question comes with fearful start.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?
Is he in pleasure's joyous throng
Where woman's eyes are sparkling bright,
Listening to some Syren's song
That may lead my boy astray
From virtue's path and honor's way?

Where is my wandering boy to-night?
I hear the bacchanalian songs,
And fancy paints the halls alight
Where youth and beauty's gathering throngs
Move in accord to music sweet
With measured steps of dancers' feet.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?

Would I could know if at this hour
Some tender eyes were beaming bright
As whispers low in love's sweet bower
Tells the same story often told
In love's soft accents never old.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?

Has he forgot his mother's prayer
E'er her pure spirit took its flight
From this sad earth of sordid care?
She could not feel in heaven a joy
If guilt and sorrow touch'd our boy.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?

I sit in silence wondering why
My boy forgets of late to write;
I try to smother back the sigh
That heaves and struggles in my breast
With cares that will not let me rest.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?

Perhaps, with duties done, now dreaming
Of happy days and scenes so bright,

That once were ours and always seeming
In happy dreams that they will come
Again and bring our lov'd ones home.

Where is my wandering boy to-night?
Paternal love, no matter where,
In good or ill, in wrong or right,
Whatever fate, whatever care,
Fall to his lot, in grief or joy,
His father's heart is with his boy.

WINE.

WINE, wine, wine! Soul-inspiring wine,
A ruby gem,
From the purple stem,
Culled on the beautiful Rhine.

Wine, wine, wine! Wine of those good old days,
When love was young,
When Sappho sung,
And Olympus rang with thy praise.

Wine, wine, wine! The nectar deities quaffed,
When Orpheus sung,
And the sweet lyre rung,
And the nymphs in Arcadia laughed.

Wine, wine, wine! Come to the festive hall
When the fair young bride
And the groom by her side
Drink health and pleasure to all.

Wine, wine, wine! Thou art ever good and fine,
Whether sparkling Hock,

Or imported stock,
Or the wildwood Muscadine.

Wine, wine, wine! The Hygeian nectar sip,
And feel in thy heart
The young blood start,
Tho' age hath withered thy lip.

Wine, wine, wine! To mortals a gift divine!
'Tis no unclean thing
Of which we sfng,
For Christ turned water to wine.

LONG AGO.

Inscribed to Mrs. S. D. Pinson, of Memphis.

IN the good old days of the long, long ago,
When our eyes were bright and our
cheeks were fair,
And on our heads no frost or snow
Of wintry cares had painted there
Memorial marks of fleeting years,
And eyes that beamed with youthful fires,
Grown dim in quenching with scalding tears,
The flames of love and youth's desires,
Time footed and winged like a bird as it flies
To life's pleasures and beauties a scorner,
Drinketh the lustre from youth's beaming eyes,
Leaving foot-prints, crow-tracks, in each
corner.
In the long, long ago, thro' the vista of years,
As I open the book and turn o'er life's pages,
The record is blotted with sorrowful tears,
And the pleasures of youth are squandered
life's wages.

In the long, long ago, we were so happy then:

Little we thought on the cares of the morrow,
When the laughter that rang o'er hilltop and
glen

Soon should be turned to a wailing of sorrow,
When all seem'd so peaceful, and hope prom-
ised bright,

The future seen thro' a kaleidoscope fair,
When the prism of fate turned the ambient light,
Changing rainbow-hued beauties to clouds
of despair.

The storm which had gathered so dark in
our sky,

Like a cyclone that sweeps from ocean to
strand,
Swept over our homes, and a heart-broken sigh
And wailing and anguish were heard in the
land.

When the drums beat to arms and the war
tocsin peal'd,

We marched forth to battle with proud,
waving crest;

But we left, with the dying and dead on the
field,

The flower of our country, our bravest and
best.

In the long, long ago, I remember so well

One fair maiden form with blonde tresses
sheen,

And her voice like a bird's so enchantingly fell
On the hearts of our boys that we dubbed
her the queen,

Queen of hearts, queen of love, queen of song,
queen of grace,

So queenly her gait and so queenly her mien,
No sculptor could chisel, no limner could trace
An image of beauty more fair than our queen.

'Tis long, long ago, like a beautiful dream,

Her features so fair still in memory lingers;
May Time, with his needle of care, stitch no seam
On her face, while mine is scar'd by his
fingers.

May her heart be as tender and warm as of
yore,

May none of life's sorrows and cares more
distress her.

There are feelings so pure and sincere at the core
Of her true woman's heart, that men say,
"God bless her."

In the long, long ago, so happy was I,
My heart long'd to set this merry old world
To music so sweet that it never could die,
But onward through space as it laughingly
whirl'd,

Mingling with chords of the musical spheres,
As it echo'd thro' realms in the worlds afar,
'Till it reached in high Heaven the angels' ears,
As they listen'd to songs of the morning star.

'Tis long, long ago, the world has much changed,
The new years come in as the old years
depart,

And some we have loved are sadly estranged,
And the world's chilly breath hangs like
frost 'round the heart.

Our Pandora of passions are scattered and
flown,

And as we turn back in sad retrospection,
The flowers that hope on our pathway had
 thrown
Only bloom in the garden of fond recollection

MERCY'S GIFTS TO MAN.

“GOD said let there be light, and there was light.”

From chaos then arose a new-made world
Over which smiled the sunbeams bright,
Which round in luminous splendor whirl'd
“When the morning stars sang together in
those days
And all the sons of God shouted for joy”
and praise.

Then God made from the finest of earth's clay
A form more beautiful than all the rest
Of his creation: and while inanimate it lay
He called His angels round to view the best
Of all his work: and said, “Shall I give this
a soul,
And make man in mine own image to
crown the whole?”

Justice sternly said: “Make him not, O God,
For he will trample on Thy righteous laws.”

Truth said: "O God, make not from this sod
 A being who will rebel against thy cause,
 To violate Thy altar and Thy fane,
 Whose impious tongue will take Thy name
 in vain."

Then gentle Mercy humbly kneeling pray'd:
 "Make him, O God, and it shall be my care
 To watch the path on which he'll tread,
 That he may fall in no deceitful snare;
 And should he err, e'en to the bitter end
 Let Justice be his judge, and Mercy be his
 friend."

Then God gave man with life a God-like soul,
 An immortal spirit cased in clay,
 And over earth and sea gave him control,
 That he by power of intellect might sway
 The animals, the fish, the fowls of air,
 And over all maintain a sovereign care.

Eden was lonely, e'en the Seraph's song
 Failed to cheer the solitary dells,

The murmuring streams that gently swept
along

O'er golden sands pearl lined with shells,
Scarce broke the silence of the wilderness,
Till woman came with love the earth to
bless.

God gave to man the woman for a wife,
And bade them live on fruits of Paradise,
Except one tree, and they should forfeit life
If they dared eat the fruit that made them
wise.

Then love first entered human hearts in
Eden,
God's holiest gift to man from heaven.

How long they dwelt in those sweet bowers
of bliss

We know not if 'twere days, or months, or
years,

Death had not come to chill the lovers' kiss,
Or fill the human hearts with doubts and
fears.

We only know the great Creator's plan
Was peace to all on earth, good will to man.

Joy reign'd in Eden 'till the tempter came
To fill the woman's heart with vain desires,
Fair Hymen's torch burnt with a holy flame
That lingers yet around love's altar's fires,
The sparks that kindled from the lights above
Eternal burn in hearts that truly love.

Man fell and by God's wrath in justice driven
From Eden's bowers into earth's desert wild,
Then Mercy kneeling at the court of Heaven
Still pray'd for blessings on God's erring child,
Begging for him some gifts from Eden's
bowers
To soothe his heart in sorrow's lonely hours.

God said to Mercy: "Give if you can find
Among things indestructible some gift
That brings relief unto the troubled mind,
And from despondency and care to lift
His thoughts to God and fill his soul with
hope,

That through God's Mercy Heaven's gate
may ope."

Then Mercy gave him Music, Love and Flowers.
Music, intangible to human touch,
Yet soothes the heart and mind in sadest hours,
Unseen, tho' felt, and yet beyond the clutch
Of his destroying hand, the Music given
By Mercy from the treasure stores of
Heaven.

With Music she gave Love, undying Love,
To dwell eternal in the human heart,
The most abused of all gifts from above,
Yet, of man's life by far the nobler part
Of his existence, which, after his last breath,
Will live in Heaven triumphant over death.

Then to delight with sweet perfume she gave
Flowers of every brilliant shape and hue
To decorate the altar and the grave,
Or sparkle in the sunlight gemmed with dew.
Tho' crushed and trampled on the earth
they lie,
Their fragrance lives, their odors never die.

THE ONLY SINNER LEFT.

I STOOD alone amid the throng,
The melancholy organ's tone
Filled hearts and aisles; while passed along
The vast assemblage, I alone,
Of all the crowd with heavy heart,
From friends and neighbors stood apart.

For I was sad that Sabbath day,
One face that always scowled on me,
Was flushed with smiles, so bright, so gay;
He was my hated enemy.
Gazing on him, the thought of wrongs
Closed ear and heart to prayers and songs.

"The meeting's over," some one said;
"Only one sinner left," and laughingly
Went on, while o'er me came a dread,
An awful thought of sad eternity.
The crowd passed on, I stood alone,
The sinner left—the only one.

I wandered through the silent wood

Beside a stream I oft had sought,
To watch the beauty of its flood;
Pondering there, while thought on thought
Weighed down my heart, around me fell
The woodland songs I loved so well.

The voice of birds, the murmuring stream,
The busy hum of buzzing bee.
I stooped to catch the sunny beam,
My mother's face looked up at me;
'Twas but my own reflected there,
But I had heard my mother's prayer.

Quickly I rose with sudden start,
The forest seemed so still again,
The blood seemed chilled around my heart,
While through it shot an aching pain;
The winds swept by, a mocking tone
In weird song sang—"One Alone."

Evening came on, the stars of heaven
Sat each upon its golden throne;
In fancy I saw the gates of Eden,
When a veil of cloud, over them thrown,

Shut out the light, I stood alone,
In darkness still, the only one.

Alone I sat me down and wept,
The bitter scalding tears fell back
Upon my heart, the hot stream swept
Like lava-floods that burn and crack
The hardest rocks in molten glow
And mark with ashes where they flow.

I looked up at the darkened heaven,
One little star I now could see.
My enemy I had forgiven.
Oh! God of mercy, pity me.
The fiend went off with mocking groan,
But I was left alone, alone.

DREAMLAND.

Written in Boyhood.

THERE is a realm of beauty in a land
Unknown to plodding mortals on this
earth,

Where power creative, with its master hand,
Ne'er yet hath given it form or hour of birth,
Fairer than the lost one of the seven,*
A realm of bliss, the sister land of Heaven.

It knows no touch of nature or of art;
It knows no form elliptical or sphere.
No monarch knows, except the poet's heart;
No soul but his can ever enter there,
And only then, when night her mantle flings
O'er earth and sea, o'er plebeian and kings.

There heavenly music's mellow witching strain
Falls enchanting on the enraptured ear,
A sweet oblivious draught to every pain
To which man's mind is subject on this sphere;
There no rude blast of sorrow can o'erwhelm

The soul that roams amid this beauteous
realm.

There innocence, as in her pristine hour,
Walks hand in hand with virtue, truth and
love;

There happiness hath built her blissful bower
Within the shade of beauty's joyous grove;
There music's voice pours forth her Cir-
cean lays,
And echoes fill the air with a song of praise.

There streams of joy their hygean waters pour
O'er fields elysian and o'er vales of bliss;
There flowers of love begem its purple shore
And bathe their blushing beauties in its kiss;
There dancing Peris wing along its streams,
And poets call this land, the land of dreams.

And would you in this land of pleasure roam,
Where beauty in its rich profusion teems?
Ask Morpheus to lead you to his home,
And ope for you the golden gate of dreams;
And would you all its joys appreciate?
Drink of Pieria, ere you ope the gate.

And would you know this land of purity,
And would you enter in its portals fair?
Then ask Imagination for the key;
Ask fleet-winged Fancy to transport you there;
Ask Poesy to lend her magic spell,
The "open sesame" to this glorious realm.

There my freed soul, in sweet clairvoyance, oft,
Loosed from its heavy prison-house of clay,
On Fancy's wing delights to soar aloft,
And through those realms of love and beauty
stray;
And oft I frown to see the morning beams,
Because they bring a lethe to my dreams.

And when the golden god of day on high
Drives to the shades night's bright and starry
train,
I watch his trackless path along the sky
And sigh to greet the vesper star again,
And when my soul with life's dull cares are
prest,
I long to see the night that brings me rest.

'Twas but last night, on Fancy's golden wings
 My spirit wandered through the land of
 dreams,
 And chanced to meet, while in its wanderings,
 Thine own bright spirit by love's crystal
 streams,
 And while through those bright realms of
 bliss we roved,
 I told how fondly I on earth had loved.

And then methought I saw the timid tears
 Steal trembling from thine eyes, and thy
 sweet voice,
 Far sweeter than the music of the spheres,
 Fell on my heart and bade my soul rejoice,
 While thy dear head reclined upon my
 breast,
 And thy loved form my fond warm bosom
 prest.

Oh! blissful dream! why should I e'er awake?
 Why is not life but one long summer's dream?
 Why must sleep fly if but Aurora shake
 Her dewy tresses in the morning's beam?

Why are life's joys so transient and so
seeming?

Oh! why cannot our souls be ever dreaming?

I know not now how long we lingered there
When morning o'er my sleeping vision fell,
Ushering in the day with all its cares,
But still my heart is haunted with the spell
Of that bright dream, and still in memory
Will live and flourish ever bright for thee.

Now, rest my muse, since I have done my
theme,

I care not now what storms may gather o'er,
If thou wilt but be with me when I dream
And waft my spirit to that blissful shore
Where I can taste of love's bright crystal
streams,
While my soul revels in the Land of Dreams.

*Lost Pleiad.

MINTA-HO-YAH.

SEE that hound? Now ain't she a beauty?
Eyes soft as a doe's and full of affection!
Look at her well; she's my pet, and admits of
the closest inspection.

Just fancy her leading the pack; what music
they make, too, in crying!

Tally-ho! whoop! how they go! and Minta-ho-
yah is flying.

Minta-ho-yah was named for a girl in the Chick-
asaw Nation—

The sweetest wild rose on the plain, with lips
as red as carnation.

In English, "Come, let's hunt together" (Min-
ta-ho-yah) in Chickasaw tongue.

You bet. I was once sweet upon her—quite
spoony, but then I was young.

Besides, she was a chief's daughter. Old Itta-
wamba, her sire,

Was the biggest chief in the Nation, but rather
addicted to fire—

Fire-water, I mean, that the pale faces gave to
the red,

Then cheated them out of the land for which
their forefathers bled.

But Minta-ho-yah, the beauty—Minta-ho-yah,
love's morning star—

That beamed on my heart in my boyhood, my
boyhood at old Lochinvar.

“Oostook Kabawpha” (broken pumpkin) was
the Indian name for the place,

Which my father changed into “Lochinvar,”
the ancient home of ^{his} the race.

His race that dwelt on the Solway where the
young laird “came out of the West”

To the Netherby Hall, on his swift steed, and
bore off the bride to his nest.

With such an ancestor to boast of, no wonder
the old Scotchman frowned

When he saw his heir sweet on an Injun; so
he bought up the old chieftain's ground

And sent Ittawamba to Westward, the chief
and little brown maid,

And I, like a fickle, false lover, forgot every
 promise I'd made;
 But often, when weary and careworn, and my
 heart with its burdens o'erteems,
 Minta-ho-yah, the love of my boyhood, comes
 to me in my dreams.

Off my text and dreaming, am I? Old memo-
 ries will often rise out
 From the cinders of the dead past, when you
 stir the cold ashes about;
 And a voice Æolian whispers a lonely, far away
 knell,
 Echoing through the heart's chambers—Min-
 ta-ho-yah, my first love, farewell !

Sentimental ! Well, rather, I guess, for one
 gray-beard and old;
 But Minta-ho-yah, the hound—I tell you there's
 not enough gold
 Or greenback in the county to buy her; just
 feel of her hair,
 Soft as silk, black as jet, and her ear, thin as a
 wafer, I swear.

She's the finest thing out, with the coldest nose
in the pack—

And all good ones; you just ought to see them
once settle down on a track,

On a cold, frosty morning, where a cunning
old fox had passed in the night—

Every nose to the ground, but watch Minta-
ho-yah—she'll hit it off right.

There's trigonometry for you—sines, cosines!
She's off at a tangent!

You bet! Old Reynard was there last night,
tho' his visit was transient.

Music? It beats the finest orchestra in concord
of musical sounds;

And Minta-ho-yah, my darling, is the Neilson
of musical hounds.

THE PRODIGAL RAVEN.

IN a cypress top by the ocean's side
A raven sat in his downy nest,
And, wooed by the voice of the murmuring tide,
He longed to skim o'er the purple crest,
And he flew from his nest in the cypress tree
To sport with the waves of the deep blue sea.

He arose aloft on the floating cloud,
He tipped the waves in his sportive glee,
And with delight he shrieked aloud:
"Ah! who could dwell on you, lonesome tree?
Who could ride on the fleecy clouds so bright
And sport in the realms of the ether light?"

He gazed with delight on the rising sun
As he shook from his golden locks the spray
And clothed the sky in purple and dun
And decked the sea in his saffron ray;
"There!" cried the raven, "with joy will I fly
And revel amid yon beautiful sky."

With gleeful song he quickly sped

On rapid wing to that realm of light;
Yet still it seemed far, far ahead
And fast was fading from his sight;
But he persevering still had flown
Till the world beneath but a speck had grown.

But onward still he faster flew
Till the earth and sea were lost to sight,
And his wings were wet with the frozen dew,
And his way was lost in the realm of light;
Fierce hunger's pangs now pierced his breast
As he turned to seek his downy nest.

But alas! vain bird, thy wearied wings
Have borne thee far from the cypress tree,
And the thunder's deep-toned mutterings
Give warning now of a storm at sea,
And the winds as they howl o'er the billowy
 wave
Are threatening thee with a watery grave.

In vain thy endeavor to buffet the wind!
In vain is thy cry, for no succor is nigh;
Thy home in the woodland is left far behind,

And the winds in their anger will toss thee on high;
In vain is the cry for thy nest by the shore,
Thy wailing is lost in the wild tempest's roar.

The storm fiend is hushed, the tempest is o'er,
The sun is declining beneath the deep sea;
Speed quickly, raven, thy home by the shore
Soon will be hidden by darkness from thee:
The winds and the tempests thou bravely hast
passed,

Thy pinions are weary, thou canst not fly fast.

The darkness comes on, the stars' gentle light
Brightens the deep and bejewels the strand,
And although the haven you seek is in sight,
Scarce will thy weary wings bear thee to land.
He falters, despairing, but one effort more
Will bear him in safety upon the green shore.

He struggles now faintly, hope rises once more
As he catches a sight of the old cypress tree;
He shrieks with delight as he touches the shore,
The danger is past, he's escaped from the sea;
With plumage all ruffled, and, panting for rest,
With sad, drooping pinions he reaches his nest.

HE IS FALLEN.

HE is fallen, he is fallen,
Yet he fills no hero's grave,
Still his glory has departed
From the Banner of the Brave.

Pray God, his noble mother
May have slept her last on earth
Ere she heard her son called Traitor
To the land that gave him birth.

He is fallen, he is fallen,
And his comrades curse his name,
Which, dishonored, they have stricken
From the muster roll of fame.

Not with anger they upbraid him,
But with bitter tears of woe,
They bewail the fallen traitor
As his country's vilest foe.

They remember when in bivouac
Beside the camp fire's light

How he talked of home and country
And the cause for which we fight.

They remember when in battle
How his gallant soldier band
When he shouted, "Comrades, onward!"
Faced death at his command.

How gallantly he bore himself
In presence of the foe,
No mortal dared go farther
Than their leader dared to go.

How devotedly they loved him
As his dying comrades lay,
From the ground looked up to bless him
Ere their spirits passed away.

The cause is lost for which they fought,
A despot rules the land.
Who could believe that officer
Would now desert his band?

He is fallen, he is fallen,
From the pinnacle of fame;

On the future page of glory
With an Arnold write his name.

Name him not with Lee or Johnston,
Nor with Stuart or Stonewall,
But blot the page of history
That records our hero's fall.

DEATH OF THE OLD HUNTER.

THE old hunter's gone; in death he now
slumbers.

Disturb not his ashes; all calmly he rests,
While sadly I wake my harp's lowly numbers,
To call forth a lay for the purest and best.

No pearl ever lay in its rosy-lipped shell
More pure than the life that forever has fled;
No diamond e'er glittered in Golconda's dell
More bright than the honor of him who is
dead.

In vain do we list, on the bright, frosty morn,
For the tramp of the steed and the hunter's
wild cheer.

Instead of the notes of the soft, mellow horn,
'Tis the funeral dirge that falls sad on the ear.

He is dead, yet we know that in heaven he
liveth.

We would not recall him to earth if we could;

He has met his reward from the Giver who
giveth

A mansion of bliss to the pious and good.

But why do we weep? Tears cannot recall him;
He has gone to the land of the pure and the
blest,

Earth's troubles and sorrows no more can
appall him;

He has found in yon heaven a haven of rest.

ACROSTIC.

EVENING dews fall on the flowers,
Love light falls on the dew,
Little stars are smiling sweet
As I waft a kiss to you.

Now listen while I whisper soft
A word of love while stellar
Rays whose beams only can
Compare with thy bright eyes, my Ella.
I love you dear with all my heart,
Soul, body, life and mind.
Search the world from pole to pole
And none like thee I'd find.

Now are you thinking, dear, of me,
Ella, my darling love?
Is it a sin to worship thee
Like a gift from heaven above?
So, if 'tis sin to idolize,
O Lord, 'twould be distressing.
Now, I would humbly kneel and pray,

God grant to her His blessing;
Or, if the future brings a care,
Remember me, O God.
Do not let her my judgments share,
On me let fall Thy rod.
Now I pray, bless her, O God.

MOON LAKE.

I STOOD alone upon the yellow sand,
The Mississippi rolling at my feet,
Waiting to grasp with an impatient hand
The hands of those whom I had come to meet;
But they came not, and as I saw the smoke
The steamers left in their receding wake,
I check'd the rising tear and had to choke
Down bitter feelings, as I sought Moon Lake.

Moon Lake! I gaze upon thy crested wave
And ponder o'er the days of long ago,
When thy bosom opened as a grave
To hide the bold DeSoto from his foe.
Thou wert the channel of the river then,
No voice of commerce echo'd from thy shore,
The light canoe of those wild, savage men
Was all the weight thy mighty bosom bore.

Upon this spot the forest children play'd
In sunny days beside the turbid water;
Here, too, perchance, the painted warrior stay'd

To wait the coming of some chieftain's daughter.
ter.

But they are gone and left no trace behind—
Those mighty heroes of the bow and quiver;
We look in vain along thy shore to find
Some trace of those who once dwelt by the
river.

No storied urn, no sculptured stone,
No marble record of their fame
Tells of their deeds; but not unknown
Have passed away without a name
Those heroes bold, for every stream
That murmurs by with scarce a motion,
Like the sweet memory of a dream,
Bears a soft Indian name to ocean.

But hark! from far across the lake is borne
A soft and mellow tone of pleasing sounds;
It is a signal of a hunter's horn,
With the glad baying of rejoicing hounds.
With quickening pulse I rise and seize my horn,
As from my quiet dreaming I awake.

I am no longer lonely and forlorn,
My notes of joy re-echo on the lake.

And soon I see, pulling with lusty oar,
A stalwart hunter without hat or coat,
And now my friend, Joe P., leaps on the shore,
Followed by nine staunch deer hounds from
his boat.

I will not say how many a foaming glass
We drank to sportsmen not here to partake
Of our good cheer, whom we had hoped, alas,
But all in vain, to meet upon Moon Lake.

Now farewell, S., you failed to meet me here,
And I was sad because you did not come;
But oft, in the wild chase of the deer,
I thought of you in your dull city home.
Our happy days come only now and then;
Pleasures, like angels' visits are but few.
We had full fun enough for forty men,
And only Joe and I. Dear S., adieu!

SOMETHING WANTING.

In Memoriam.

THROUGH woods and vine-clad valleys
I wandered 'neath the bowers
Where woodbine hung in rich festoons
And hills were decked with flowers.
Tho' scarlet tints and golden hues
Of leaves, in sunsets glare,
Shone bright, there was something wanting—
My loved one was not there.

A quail piped loud on the prairie,
"Bob White," the sad refrain.
No call came from his dusky mate
To cheer his heart again.
On whirring wing o'er ridge and dell
As quick as wing could bear
He flew—something yet was wanting—
The loved one was not there.

A red bird on a maple tree
Caroled a wildwood lay.

All else was silent in the grove—

His mate was far away.

I whistled soft a note of love,

Red wings flashed thro' the air;

But something yet was wanting—

The loved one was not there.

I heard afar a mournful voice—

The cooing of a dove.

Sadly the notes fell on my ear;

It, too, had lost its love.

The winds sighed lonely through the trees,

The wood seemed full of care.

There is always something wanting—

When the loved one is not there.

As twilight came a whip-poor-will

Began its plaintive wail.

I left the wood, my heart was sad,

No joy was in the vale.

Tho' the sweet elusive perfume

Of autumn filled the air,

Something dearer yet was wanting—

My loved one was not there.

A mocking bird at midnight hour
Awoke me with a song,
A medley of the joys and griefs
That to the woods belong.
The hawk's shrill cry, the dove's low moan,
The forest filled with care,
There is always something wanting—
When the loved one is not there.

I mingled in the marts of trade
And in the hall of pleasure,
No flattering tongues can bring me joy,
And less I care for treasure.
Honors or wealth cannot allure,
No charm the world has given
Can ever heal a broken heart
Wanting a love in heaven.

The days are filled with busy hours,
The months will go and come,
And when the vesper stars arise
I seek my dreary home.
The kiss of love, the winsome smile,

The face so bright and fair
Are gone—something dear is wanting—
My loved one is not there.

We laugh and jest tho' hearts may bleed,
Through life we play our part,
The tears that laughing eyes would shed
Fall back and scald the heart.

I must with patience bear my cross—
"To pass under the rod,"
For the promise is not wanting
To meet my love with God.

FAREWELL.

FAREWELL is ever a sad word
When loving ones must part.
It fills the heart with grief and pain
And bids the tear-drop start.
To say "Good-bye" to those we love
There is a mournful knell
That echoes through our spirits' halls
And haunts the word Farewell!

The spot where once a garden grew,
Tho' now a desert wild,
Will still retain some friendly rose
To tell where Beauty smiled.
Thus in the garden of my heart
Some green spot will remain,
Nor time nor absence ne'er can break
One link from Memory's chain.

A STAR.

TO MRS. JOSIE FRAZEE CAPPLEMAN.

[Written for the ladies of the Electa Chapter of the Eastern Star, of Okolona, on presenting a jewelled star.]

THO' far away from friends who love you,
And mighty rivers roll between,
Tho' thick and dark the clouds above you,
Through darkest drifts there is a sheen
Of sunlight for the coming morrow
Rising o'er hills and vales afar;
As if to bring surcease of sorrow,
The evening sends its vesper star.

It was a night in Herod's reign,
When many hearts were full of fear,
The lonely shepherds on the plain
Looked up and saw a star appear
In the far east. It led them on
Where Magi with their caravan
Worshipped the Babe, the Blessed One,
With "Peace on earth, good will to man,"

They knelt beside the humble manger,
And many a costly gift they gave
While worshipping the little stranger
That God had sent the world to save—
The gifts of love and pure affection
The Magi brought from lands afar.
We, too, in love and recollection,
Know what your many virtues are.

And though no kind word can be spoken
Across the hills and streams so far,
We send to you, as a love token,
Emblem of faith and love—a star.
Wear it with honor on your breast,
An amulet to soothe each care,
And may the God who bringeth rest
To the afflicted hear our prayer

And bless you through the coming years
With all the joys to mortals given,
And wipe away in smiles your tears
With every gift of earth and heaven;
And when the time comes, soon or late—

For all must lie beneath the sod—
May angels watch you from the gate
On a stair of stars ascend to God.

DECORATION DAY.

NO roll of the drum or pickets alarm
Can awake from their slumbers the
brave who lie here,

They quietly sleep secure from all harm—
Heróes who knew not the feeling of fear.

No foeman is near; amongst friends they now
slumber.

Disturb not their ashes, all calmly they rest,
While sadly I wake my harp's lowly number
To call forth a lay for the bravest and best.

Those mounds are a garden of honor and glory,
There have we planted the flower of our land
To bloom forth in beauty of song and story,
Their deeds have made sacred the spot where
we stand.

Immortal their fame! Shall their names be
forgot
And only their deeds live in songs of our
braves?

While a soldier survives, O comrades, let not
It be said we neglected to honor their graves.

Fair maidens of Southland, bright garlands
entwine

To lay on the earth now a brave soldier's bed.
Ye sons of our heroes, may you ever enshrine
In your hearts' warmest chambers a love for
our dead.

Oh! where are my comrades, those bold cavaliers,

Those dashing young fellows who cared for
no dangers?

My bosom heaves proudly, my eyes fill with
tears,

As fondly I think of the Chickasaw Rangers.

On fields they made brilliant by heroic daring,
Now gloomy with graves where unshrouded
they lie,

Will their comrades forget them, unmindful,
uncaring,

Nor tell, in proud marble, how heroes can
die?

The Chickasaw Guards and Prairie Rifles,
 Whose volleys so often rang out the death
 knell

Of many a foeman, will friends longer stifle
 Their feelings and leave them unknown
 where they fell?

Chickasaw heroes for cause and opinion
 Fought from the Potomac to Mexic Gulf's
 waves—

Shall we now neglect to secure from oblivion
 The names of so many of Chickasaw's braves?

Shall the Chickasaw rose, that little wild flower,
 Alone mark the spot where a hero lies dead?
 Shall we leave him alone without a bright
 bower

Of love-cultured roses to smile on his bed?

In commemoration of dead that we slew,
 At Vicksburg and Corinth tall monuments
 stand.

In honoring their dead, they honor the few
 Brave Southrons who fought in defense of our
 land.

The fortunes of war cannot change our belief.

Our cause it was just, and we knew it was
right.

We lament our defeat, but more bitter the grief
For the brave men who fell in our just cause
of fight.

Now, comrades and friends, let us build out of
stone

A shaft that will point to their spirits on high,
And when they look down from heaven's white
throne

They will see they are honored wherever they
lie.

Then let them sleep on, they are free from all
sorrow;

The wild rose will bloom again o'er the green
sod

That hides them forever till on that bright
morrow

They'll march forth in glory in presence of
God.

We will honor the graves of the gray and the
blue,

We will try to forgive, and we'll try to forget,
But there is something so warm, so sincere
and so true,

In an old rebel's heart that love him best yet.

MY FRIEND.

I HAD a friend I dearly loved in youth's
bright morning,
Of all the comrades of that day I loved him
best.

The first thought in the waking hour of
dawning
Was of the friend the day would make my
guest.

Hand in hand and heart to heart we together
grew.

I was rich and he was poor which made no
difference.
All I had was naught to me unless he shared
it too.

I was happy, for his smile was more than
recompense.

Years rolled on. War's fiery car with hostile
legions left behind
A charred and cindered track, the mark of
fate.

From ensanguined fields of carnage I came
to find

My fortune wrecked, my home made desolate.

Then with stout heart I gathered what was left
to start anew

Upon life's journey. On my frame wounds
and disease

Had left their mark. A shattered constitu-
tion too

Had made an invalid of me. I longed for ease,

Yet gave no time to sad repining; my heart
arose

From out the depths of its despair, each care
defying.

I laid my warrior weapons by, but did not seek
repose,

Nor wasted time in hopeless tears o'er losses
sighing.

All my energies I gave to build my country up
again—

To help my people in this sad day of their
distress,

With generous hand to aid the weak, sympathizing with their pain,

I clothed the naked, fed the poor, with no thought of selfishness.

For this I asked for no reward, and if I had I should have met

What always follows sacrifice, the basest ingratitude.

The world goes round, and with each day men will forget

The hand that yesterday was stretched to give them food.

Men change their gods in every age and worship idols, calves of gold

Are set on Sinai's awful peak and all the mountains of the world.

Hindu temples, Christian shrines, are marts where hearts and minds are sold;

Virtue changes into vice, Mammon's flag is never furled.

The only thing that does not change, is change, that's always changing—

A paradox, and yet not strange, man him-
self's a contradiction,

An image of a God, the devil his soul's sanct-
uary ranging,

Spoils the great Creator's plan by making
real life a fiction.

What is in life worth living for in constant
dread of death?

What is in death so fearful which brings with
it new life?

The infant man, helpless and weak, scarce has
drawn its breath

When it begins life's struggle and lives and
grows in strife.

As all things in nature do, the strong devour
the weak on land and seas,

Large fish kill small fish—so with beast and
birds and men.

Many lives must perish for one that lives; the
bees

Gather sweets from roses a few days and die,
and then

A new swarm eats the honey left; men spend
lives in toil

To accumulate great wealth, then like bees
they die,

Leaving heirs to spend in litigation and turmoil
Until all is gone—the working sire laid by.

Yet there is no change. History repeats itself
in every age.

The seasons regularly walk their splendid
round.

December kills the flowers of May—likewise
the sage

With years of wisdom returns into the ground.

Men come and go, yet none are missed from earth.

Passions exist in those who live as in those
who die.

Is death reality? Do men die? What then is
birth?

Whence come life and soul? Is spirit deified?

Is there anything eternal or anything ex-
tinguished

That ever lived on earth? How do we know
a soul
Is born within a frame of clay? Are men,
distinguished
By immortal names, annihilated in a hole?
Theories are dreams. Life is real—and my
friend,
Like fortune always fickle, capriciously had
left;
Our friendship rudely broken came to a bit-
ter end.
With loss of fortune, I was of my friend
bereft.

Always busy, he “passed me on the other side,”
If by chance we met he looked the other way.
No friendly glance met mine, and often he
would ride
By me and would pass without a word to say.
He shunned me as a leper, now that I was poor,
As if there was contagion in an empty purse,

Which in its healthy fullness was ever wont to
pour

Its treasures in his hand; but now the fatal
curse

Of poverty was mine, which he treated as a
crime—

By him a grievous sin—one not to be for-
given.

A false friend and hypocrite, he lived out his
time:

A grave stone now records he's "gone to
heaven."

I did not lose my trust in God, or faith in man's
humanity—

Society like water will always find its level—

I still retained my self-respect and faith in
Christianity:

The more I love my fellowman, the less I fear
the devil.

God heard my prayers and gave me health,
strength and will

To labor for others' happiness, but not for
treasure;
The wheel of fortune, which is never standing
still,
Turned up for all my wants sufficient measure.

QUEEN OF THE ANTILLES.

QUEEN of the Antilles, fairest of all isles!
There the sunshine of summer unceasingly smiles;

There the orange and lemon perennial bloom,
Filling the air with their fragrant perfume.
Nowhere on earth do the sun's gentle rays
Fall brighter or softer than on thy green cays.

Queen of the Antilles, beautiful isle!
There the sun-kissed sea breezes the winters
beguile;

There the gulf stream that mirrors the tropical
moon

Changes December to a climate of June,
Where bright golden fruits, on evergreen trees,
Shine like the apples of Hesperides.

Queen of the Antilles, pearl of the ocean!
Thy people are fighting with loyal devotion,
Shedding their blood as freely as wine,

Cutting their way through the trocha's dark
line;

Using machetes for want of a gun,
They shout "Cuba Libre" o'er victories won.

Queen of the Antilles, beautiful isle!
Thy soldiers are guarding each mountain defile.
Like eagles they swoop to the foe on the plain,
And strike the invader, vile tyrants of Spain,
Fighting the Spaniard from mountain to sea,
Happy in dying for Cuba Libre.

Queen of the Antilles, bright gem of the sea!
Fight on, brave hearts, we are coming to thee.
The spirits of heroes who died on the Maine
Are crying for vengeance on treacherous Spain.
We are coming, Fair Cuba, across the blue sea,
To join you in battle for Cuba Libre.

A LOVE LETTER.

MY DEAR, it is Sunday; I scarce can do
better

In passing the time than in writing a letter—
It can't be called labor in writing a few
Pleasant things I remember when thinking of
you.

Last Sabbath morning I reached your good
city—

But it's not of the town I am writing a ditty—
I went to the church and now I am vexed,
For thinking of you I've forgotten the text.
I've the greatest respect for the parson's the-
ology,

But thought he would never get to the doxology.
I had traveled all night, over many a mile,
But was doubly refreshed by a beautiful smile
From the woman I love; as she turned to the
door

For a moment I stood transfixed to the floor,

Then shook the priest's hand as I passed down
the aisle,

With a hope that was built on that beautiful
smile.

That evening we met in my charmer's sweet
home,

And I vowed in my heart ne'er again would I
roam

If I only could win that sweet maid for my wife,
For whom I'd devote all the rest of my life.

Next morning I called and told her the story
Of dangers I'd passed on the red fields of glory.
When my tales had been told my warfare was
done,

But the greatest of all of my battles was won—
I tendered my love, with my heart and my hand,
And now I'm the happiest man in the land.

She accepted my hand and my pen loves to
linger,

As I gaze with delight at the ring on my finger.
I wait with impatience the day that will come,

When I lead from the altar my bride to my
home.

I'm not given to rhyming, tho' it might have
been worse,

Were not the love going with it far better than
verse;

But the kind words you gave me forever will
dwell

In my heart's warmest chambers. Dear sweet-
heart, farewell!

THE WEDDING FEAST OF PELEUS.

THE Gods of the Heathens made a descen-
sion

On Mount Olympus, to hold a convention.
By order of Zeus they came to consult,
On the marriage of Thetis, what would result
If the predictions of Themis came true.
It was something to make celestials blue,
Thetis, the grand-daughter of Poseidon,
Destined to be mother of a great son.
The thing that seemed the Gods now to bother,
The son would be more renowned than his
father.

The Gods then decreed that Thetis' son,
Descended from God of the sea, Poseidon,
Must have a king of the earth for his sire.
What more could mortal of this earth desire?
Had not the island of Delos arose,
A birthplace for Gods and Latona's repose?
For a God and a Goddess were there given birth,

Immortal themselves, tho' born upon earth,
With the royal ichor of Gods in their veins,
Untainted by blood of mortality strains.
No fate had decreed they should be greater
Than Zeus, King of Gods, their sire and creator.

It was different when a nymph of the sea
Might mother a son that was greater than he.
When Zeus, a young God to maturity grown,
Had driven his father, Kronos, from his throne.
So Peleus, a Grecian King, was selected;
Nor could the decree of Gods be rejected.
To the wedding feast all the Gods were invited,
Except Eris (Discord), she had been slighted.
With the reign of Kronos the golden age
Had passed to Grecian history's page.
In religion then it was the fashion
To have a God for every passion,
When Gods and mortals, on a level,
Joined in the pleasures of the revel.
And here I scarcely need to mention
It was not thought a condescension.

No God presumed upon his station
After this marital relation
Had brought about amalgamation.
Nor did they raise the question whether
The Gods and men should eat together.
One thing that helped their pride to smother,
The guests were all of the same color.
No racial marks of black-and-tan—
The Gods were white and so was man.
The tables groaned with every sweet
That Gods and men desired to eat.
The lakes and streams supplied the fish,
Each served upon a golden dish;
The bear, the deer, wild duck and quails
And plates with tongues of nightingales,
Cakes with honey of Hymettian bees,
Apples from garden of Hesperides,
With plum and peach, and pears and cherries,
Clusters of grapes black, and strawberries,
Ambrosial nectar by Hebe filled,
Sparkling wines, Bacchus distilled;
Flowers of every hue were there,

Whose fragrant odors filled the air.
Comus, the god of Mirth and Pleasure,
Poured out the wine in generous measure.
Euterpe played her double flute,
Accompanied by Apollo's lute,
Resounding through the festive hall^s
For pleasure of the Bacchinals.
To the delight of the Divines,
Polymnia sung of loves and wines,
After the wedding feast was done,
The music pealed—the fun begun.
The sandal-footed Terpsichore
Led in the dance as told in story
Of the gayest scene e'er known on earth
Where Comus led the throngs in mirth.
But joy is brief e'en when the Gods
Have joined with mortals on earth's sods.
When merriment was at its height,
Eris, ill natured child of Night,
With vengeance her wicked heart incited,
Came to the wedding uninvited.
Angered for what she deemed a wrong,

Threw a golden apple in the throng,
Worded, "For the most beautiful."
Each Goddess thought herself most suitable
To receive Eris' golden prize,
Which caused a quarrel to arise
With Hera, Aphrodite and Athena
Far better suited for the arena.
To me it seems, to say the least,
It ill became a wedding feast.
I like not e'en in verse to chide
Goddesses, but sympathy for the bride,
Who could but doubt Athena's sanity,
In developing such mortal vanity.
No wonder if it seemed to Zeus
Plutonian fiends had broken loose,
With strife among immortal ladies,
Making a scene more fit for hades.
Olympian code, no law provided
How such disputes could be decided,
For immortals' law made no provision;
So 'twas left for mortal courts' decision.
The court of Paris has been described,

Like human courts with judges bribed,
Which only shows that courts in ancient days,
Like modern courts, alike in evil ways,
Judges have been bribed in every nation.
They are apt to smile on a great corporation.
Princes and powers, e'en the church itself,
Bow submissive to the God of Wealth.
To Paris' credit, we find he was above
Accepting wealth or honors, He took love.
Hera offered him "all Asia's throne;"
Athena, "fame immortal for his own."
The Grecian Helen for his bride
Made him for Aphrodite's gift decide.
By a woman's quarrel over a trifling toy
Eris brought on the direful woes of Troy.

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